3 1609/5637.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

PERNICIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF

Foreſtalling, Regrating, and Ingroſſing,

WITH

A LIST OF THE STATUTES

Which have been enacted for the Puniſhment of thoſe Offences:

PROPOSALS

FOR NEW LAWS

THAT MAY TEND TO ENCOURAGE TILLAGE, AND YET KEEP THE PRICE OF PROVISIONS OF ALL KINDS WITHIN REASONABLE BOUNDS:

THOUGHTS

ON

The Impolicy of the Conſolidation of Small Farms;

WITH

REMARKS

On the Coal Trade, Sale of Cattle in Smithfield, Contractors, Carcaſe and Cutting Butchers, Cheeſemongers, Poulterers, &c. &c. &c.

ABRIDGED:

BY J. S. GIRDLER, Esq.

FROM A WORK WHICH HE HAS JUST PUBLISHED.

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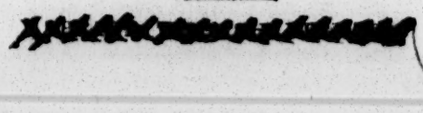
1800.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.



1609/5637.

ADVERTISEMENT.

HAVING devoted much time and pains in compoſing a Work (now before the Public) relating to Foreſtalling, Regrating, Ingroſſing, &c.—I was anxious to diffuſe as much information as poſſible on ſo intereſting a ſubject, and I conceived that the beſt mode of accompliſhing that wiſh would be to reduce the principal articles, on which I had dwelt at ſome length, into the preſent ſize, at a low price, ſo that it may ſuit a more extenſive claſs of Readers, who have little leiſure, and who may yet wiſh to be aſſiſted in forming a proper opinion of the real cauſe of the preſent high price of Proviſions.

ERRATA.

Page	Line	
23,	38,	for c. 21, *read* 71.
28,	9,	— 12 Jam. I. *read* 21 Jam. I.
	15,	— 1563 *read* 1663.
	last,	— c. 3, *read* c. 1.
29,	6,	— 1 Geo. II. *read* 11 Geo. II.
	7,	— 4 Geo. II. *read* 14 Geo. II. and for *one year* read *for a time*.
	8,	— 5 Geo. II. *read* 15 Geo. II.
	9,	— c. 3, *read* c. 1.
79,	19,	— Geo. III. *read* Geo. II.
91,	13,	— *their value* read *their* former *value*.

OBSERVATIONS, &c.

THE ſubject of the following ſheets has engaged my attention for ſome years, at the expenſe of my health and domeſtic concerns. I was unwilling, after all the pains I had beſtowed on it, that the fruit of my labour ſhould be loſt to the public, becauſe it may happen, and I truſt it will, ſome abler hand may arrange the materials that I have collected, improve the hints that I have ſuggeſted, and place the facts in a ſtronger point of view than time and the neceſſity of a ſpeedy publication would permit me to do.—I look for no praiſe beyond that of having *meant well* in a good cauſe; and, if viewed through that medium by the indulgent and candid Reader, it is all that I requeſt. On a queſtion that branched out into ſuch a variety of opinions, it was neceſſary to collect and weigh almoſt every one before I ventured to advance any of my own. In order to do this with any degree of certainty, I called in the aid of two guides —FACT and EXPERIENCE—indiſputable fact, and experience, as Mr. Burke ſays, "rich with the hoar of time." The firſt inquiry that naturally arreſted my attention, was one that ought, as I conceived, to be determined in the outſet, as the very *ſubſtratum* of the ſuperſtructure. It was this—"Does, or does not this country grow a ſufficiency of Corn to feed its own inhabitants?" The negative has been aſſerted by the *intereſted*, who have rung the changes on bad Seaſons, Diſtilleries, &c. &c. Men of plain

ſenſe have been led away by the ſound, aided by ſpecious arguments; but it is eaſy to obſerve, that truth is of a plain, unadorned nature, and that it is only when men have a mind to deceive, that they reſort to ingenious arguments, ſyllogiſtic reaſonings, and ſtudied phraſeology. There certainly was a time when this country did not grow a ſufficiency of grain for home conſumption, but let it be remembered, that it was at a period, when agriculture was at a low ebb.*

And yet, notwithſtanding the low ſtate of our tillage in thoſe days, we exported Corn to France;† but ſurely this is not the caſe at preſent, nor for many years paſt; for ſuch is, and has been the attention paid to huſbandry, that Mr. *Pitt*, on opening the Ways and Means of the year 1789, congratulated the Houſe and the country on the rapid progreſs of agriculture, which had been carried to ſuch an extent, "that he hoped the plough-ſhare would ſhine at the top of the then barren mountains." From all the inquiries that I have been able to make, I do not heſitate to ſay, that the country, on an average of one year with another, does grow a ſufficient quantity of Corn to feed its own inhabitants; thoſe who may endeavour to controvert this aſſertion would do well to peruſe the following table firſt, and then anſwer this queſtion—Is not export of Corn a proof of the redundancy of that neceſſary article?

* Sir *Thomas Culpeper* in 1681, ſpeaking of England, ſays, "At preſent, whilſt Corn and other merchandiſes, which the earth produces, are at a low price, the ſpade and the plough are forſaken, the poor find little employment, and the wages are extremely low."

† Mr. *Howel*, clerk of the Council, in a letter from *Rouen*, dated September 7th, 1619, ſays,—"'Tis true, England hath a good repute abroad for her fertility, yet, be our (the *French*) harveſts never ſo kindly, and our crops never ſo plentiful, *we have every year ſome grain from Old England.*"

An ACCOUNT *of the Quantity of* CORN *exported from* ENGLAND *from Michaelmas* 1697 *to Chriſtmas* 1764; *diſtinguiſhing each Year, as preſented to the Houſe of Commons in* 1764.

Years.	Wheat. Qrs.	Barley. Qrs.
1697	14,698	32,855
1698	6,857	30,984
1699	557	75
1700	49,056	25,896
1701	98,323	21,953
1702	90,230	16,280
1703	106,615	71,523
1704	90,313	30,729
1705	96,185	21,386
1706	188,332	10,221
1707	74,155	4,771
1708	83,406	29,937
1709	169,679	40,512
1710	13,924	5,744
1711	76,949	8,412
1712	145,191	19,383
1713	176,227	52,542
1714	174,821	18,579
1715	169,490	5,080
1716	74,926	14,857
1717	22,953	18,435
1718	71,800	74,139
1719	127,762	9,649
1720	83,084	4,505
1721	81,632	11,608
1722	178,880	37,528
2723	157,719	45,789
1724	245,864	10,289
1725	204,413	13,782
1726	142,183	20,017
1727	30,315	8,688

Years.	Wheat. Qrs.	Barley. Qrs.
1728	3,817	198
1729	18,993	4,650
1730	93,970	14,982
1731	130,025	13,562
1732	202,058	13,874
1733	427,199	37,598
1734	498,196	70,224
1735	153,343	57,520
1736	118,170	6,860
1737	461,602	23,669
1738	580,596	70,689
1739	279,542	54,447
1740	54,390	24,036
1741	45,416	6,614
1742	293,250	11,482
1743	371,431	34,995
1744	231,984	20,090
1745	324,839	95,878
1746	130,646	158,719
1747	266,906	103,140
1748	543,387	73,857
1749	629,049	52,621
1750	947,602	224,500
1751	661,416	32,698
1752	429,279	106,331
1753	299,608	67,049
1754	256,270	47,776
1755	237,459	32,836
1756	101,936	26,938
1757	11,226	7,094
1758	9,233	691,010
1759	226,426	22,862
1760	390,710	54,592
1761	440,746	97,897
1762	294,500	130,873
1763	427,074	38,390
1764	396,537	9,218

To the improvement in agriculture let that of gardening be added. We no longer import Cabbages, eſculent roots, &c. from Holland, and other parts of the Continent. As to the Agricultural Reports, they muſt be read with caution—nor would it be far from the truth to ſay, that they are cooked up by *intereſted* men, who deal out ſprings, ſeaſons, and harveſts to us almoſt as they pleaſe—who affect, in the words of Shakſpeare, "to look into the ſeeds of time, and tell us which will grow and which will not." They are very much offended if any perſon, particularly travellers, attempt to give an opinion on the ſubject; they feel as if it were trenching on their province—we ſhall, however, inſert two of their reports; the firſt in the beginning of the year, and the ſecond in the latter end of it—for ſurely, according to the opinions of theſe Reporters, the preſent high price of proviſions cannot be attributed to an unproductive harveſt, nor yet to exportation.

Monthly Report for April 1800.

"Though the late rains have given the *Wheats* a yellow caſt, on heavy lands, they have checked the working of the worm and ſlug, and conſequently been beneficial, on the whole: the hoeing has, however, been ſo long retarded, that the crops, it is feared, will prove generally foul. The expected ſupply of Corn from the Baltic promiſes to reduce the exorbitant price of the Markets, which has never been juſtified by the public exigency. Government have unremittingly exerted themſelves, to provide for any real neceſſity, as well as to counteract the extortionate demands of our own Dealers: and the foreign ſupply they have ſecured, will, no doubt, anſwer both theſe eſſential purpoſes.—The *Spring Corn* has in every diſtrict a promiſing appearance;—the *Barleys* and *Oats* were ſcarcely ever known to plant ſo kindly—and every article of the pulſe kind ooks well.—The *Rape*, and other ſmall ſeeds are

not expected to prove a great crop.—The ſhow of *Graſs* is every where abundant.

" SMITHFIELD Market having had ſeveral ſhort ſupplies, it has occaſioned an exorbitant riſe in the prices of all kinds of meat hitherto unknown. Prime *Beef* and *Mutton* ſold as high as 8s. per ſtone, and *Veal* ſtill dearer; but the abundance of feed, it is hoped, will ſoon cauſe a reduction in theſe neceſſary articles of human ſubſiſtence. The increaſe of the *Sheep* kind, by the late fall of *Lambs*, is large through all the breeding counties—*Lean Stock* of all kinds is plentiful, though the prices are kept up, from the quantity of growing feed.—The HOP plantations throw out plenty of bine, and promiſe to ſtock the poles well.

" The WOOL Trade is briſk, and on the riſe; more, it is ſuppoſed, on a ſpeculative idea of the Commercial Union with Ireland, than any increaſed demand in our own manufactories.

Agricultural Report for September, 1800.

" For the moſt part during the beginning of the month the ſeaſon continued favourable for the harveſt, and of courſe moſt of the grain, even in the northern parts of the kingdom, has been reaped and got into the barns or ſtacks in good condition. In the northern diſtricts we find that the wheat crops though in ſome places rather thin upon the ground, have turned out remarkably full in the ear, and fine in the quality of the grain. The barleys and oats are alſo very heavy crops, except in ſuch grounds as were cold and wet in the ſpring months, where they are light, but much better than might have been expected under ſuch circumſtances. So great has been the crop of oats in the Fens, and that neighbourhood, that a farmer of Ipſwich, has offered a bet, that his produce of that grain upon 38 acres of land is 400 quarters, or upwards of 44 buſhels per acre. On Sept. 17th, 1279 quarters, and 34,942 bags of Wheat; together with 1582 barrels of flour had been entered within the laſt week at the Liverpool

cuſtom-houſe from the Baltic and America. The importation of Corn at Newcaſtle likewiſe ſtill continues to ſo great an extent, that many dwelling-houſes are converted into granaries. Theſe appearances and importations ſeem, however, to have yet had but a trifling effect in reducing the very extravagant prices of Grain.

" The turnip crops have in general been greatly improved by the late rains, and are extremely valueable, eſpecially on the more northern parts of the iſland, on account of the failure or deficiency of the fog or after-graſs crops. Potatoes, on the dry and gravelly ſoils, have been much confined in their growth by the late very hot weather; but on other kinds of ſoil they are in general good. The fallows have moſtly been well prepared, and in ſome the Wheat has been ſown, and almoſt every where the land is in a ſtate of readineſs for its being put into the ſoil.

" At Worceſter, Sept. 13, 68 pockets of new hops were weighed, prices from 17l. to 19l. per cwt. Yearling hops, of which 250 pockets were ſold, went from 14l. to 17l. 10s. In Kent they are now very far advanced in their picking, which will, probably, generally cloſe in the courſe of next week. The continued fine weather keeps the plant in full condition, although the hot ſun upon the dew has taken off the brightneſs of colour. It is computed that they average 5 cwt. per acre. Upon the whole, the preſent liberal prices certainly makes it one of the moſt profitable ſeaſons for the planter upon record. The duty is now doing at 72,000l.

" At Canterbury, Sept. 18, the firſt Hop Market for this ſeaſon was held at the Fleece Inn, which was numerouſly attended by both buyers and planters; many fine ſamples were produced, and very conſiderable buſineſs done, the buyers being very inclinable to purchaſe, and the ſellers ready to accept the following prices: Bags 15l. to 15l. 15s. Pockets 16l.—17l. to 17l. 5s.

" CATTLE. Fat ſtock ſtill keeps to a high price, but lean cattle continue on the decline from the want of graſs in many places. Fat ſheep ſtill ſell well, but lean ones in general experience a dull ſale. Lambs go off pretty well.

" Good horſes continue to ſell high, but thoſe of the inferior kind have a dull ſale."

To theſe reports I ſhall ſubjoin the following obſervations, which I met with in the *St. James's Chronicle.*

" I cannot help adverting to the general inaccuracies of the *Monthly Reports of Agriculture.* They are hardly ever correct: almoſt always erroneous. And perhaps there is no one more wide of the truth than the laſt.

" Much attention has been beſtowed this year by travellers to the ſtate of the Corn, particularly Wheat and Barley: and it is the opinion, not of a few perſons, but the general ſentiment, that a more abundant crop never covered the land. Men do not travel with their eyes ſhut; they have deeply inveſtigated the buſineſs. If the preſent crop is deficient, all former crops have been ſcanty.

" But the perſon who forms the *Monthly Reports* makes the Wheat produce very defective; he eſtimates it only about two-thirds. There are ſome perſons who, thinking themſelves wiſe, are yet fooliſh. Conſidering how much the attention of the nation has been lately, and now is, occupied with the high price of Corn, ought not both Farmers and Corn-dealers to infer, that the unavoidable conſequence muſt be a total change?—A change productive of a ſmaller diviſion of Farms, and a change productive of a total alteration in the manner of vending their produce.

September 4, 1800. A. B."

Having ſettled this point, I hope to the ſatisfaction of the Reader, I ſhall proceed to another head:—That the *Public* have ſuffered long, and, I am ſorry to ſay, continue to ſuffer from the enormous

advance in the prices of all the neceſſaries of life, is a truth *felt* by many, *known* to all; and *lamented* by the *humane*; but, *Medicinæ tempus eſt, non querelæ.* The ſource of the evil is at length diſcovered; it may be traced to the avarice of man, who has intercepted the bounty of his Maker; it may be traced, I ſay, to the Monopolizer, the Ingroſſer, and Regrater; theſe are the men, or men in form, who ſhut their ears to the cries of the poor—who ſhrink at the approach of diſtreſs, like the ſenſitive plant at the touch, and who drink the tears of the diſtreſſed out of cups of ſilver:—I now repeat it, once for all, that as nothing but the real diſtreſs of the labouring poor could induce me to addreſs myſelf thus to the public, ſo nothing but the conviction that the remedy is in the hands of the legiſlature, could encourage me to call upon each member of that body, in the ſacred words of the Apoſtle to our Lord,—"*Maſter, careſt thou not if we periſh?*"

On receipt of a copy of his Grace the Duke of Portland's Circular Letter to the Lords Lieutenants of the ſeveral Counties, dated the 28th of October, 1795, on the ſubject of procuring "An Account of the produce of the (then) late crop of the ſeveral articles of Grain grown in each county, comparing the ſame with the produce of a fair crop of every ſuch article of Grain in common years, and with the produce of the crop of 1794, of every ſuch article of Grain;" and which was ſent to me as a Magiſtrate for the county of Middleſex; I conſidered it my duty, when in London, to attend the Meetings of the Juſtices of the Peace on that occaſion, at the Seſſions-houſe, Clerkenwell-green. I did ſo, and was not a little mortified to obſerve, that moſt of the perſons who attended to give information to the Juſtices on the ſubject, were Farmers, Corn and Flour-dealers, and Bakers, who appeared to me to anſwer the queſtions put to them as beſt ſuited their own intereſts. Convinced that a return of the quantity of Corn in the county made

from ſuch evidence muſt be extremely fallacious and much too low; and not doubting that the returns of other counties would be influenced by teſtimonies of a like nature. From that moment I redoubled my efforts and inquiries, reſolved to ſpare neither trouble nor expenſe to aſcertain the real facts. And the reſult of my inquiries and labours, ſo far as they relate to Wheat and other Grain; and likewiſe as relating to the ſeveral other neceſſaries of life, I have endeavoured to ſtate, fairly and candidly, in the following ſheets, without partiality or diſguiſe on the one hand, or prejudice on the other.

In the month of Auguſt of the year 1799, perſons travelling in various parts of the kingdom bore teſtimony to the pleaſing appearance of grain in general, particularly Wheat, which promiſed a plentiful harveſt.* And after the harveſt had commenced, the crop was generally reported, and commonly underſtood to be good; and even the Farmers and Corn-dealers themſelves acknowledged it for a time. But they ſoon reſorted to thoſe common-place barefaced aſſertions, with which they have amuſed the Public for a ſeries of years. Of theſe aſſertions they have two kinds, one calculated for wet and the other for dry ſeaſons. Has the ſeaſon and the harveſt been dry? they tell you that the corn has been parched and burnt up before it was reaped, and affect to lament that after it was reaped, no rain had fallen to plump it up, and cauſe it *to fill the buſhel.*† Has the

* The Author in his Letter, dated the 12th of Auguſt, 1799, inſerted in the Reading Mercury, and which afterwards found its way into many other Papers (amongſt ſundry other obſervations) took occaſion to remark on the report of ſeveral intelligent and reſpectable Gentlemen, confirmed by obſervations in the other provincial papers, "That the appearance of the growing crops in general, afforded the moſt pleaſing proſpect of a productive harveſt:" and this was ſo true that none but intereſted perſons doubted the fact.

† Should the preſent dry ſeaſon, and excellent harveſt weather continue, our ears will be dinned, and newſpapers filled with paid-for paragraphs of this common-place traſh, againſt the dry ſeaſon, ſoon after the new grain begins to be thraſhed out and ſold.

ſeaſon and harveſt been wet, as the ſeaſon and harveſt of 1799 were? They carefully avoid ſaying any thing about the neceſſity of rain to *fill the buſhel*; and tell you that the Corn has been beaten down and lodged by the rain before reaping it, and when reaped lay ſo long on the ground as to ſpindle and grow out, and thereby became ſpoiled; that much of it in the low and fen lands had been waſhed away by the floods or rotted under them; and finally, when they come to thraſh it, they ſay that the little which eſcaped all theſe diſaſters has plenty of ſtraw, but with ſcarce any Corn in it. That Corn on low and damp lands is, in a wet ſeaſon, ſubject in ſome degree, to ſuch misfortunes, is a fact not to be denied; but the high and dry lands always over pay the deficiency of the low lands; and hence the old Engliſh Proverb—

Whenever the *hill* aſſiſts the *dale*,
There is abundance of Corn for ſale.

The prices were kept up, and almoſt daily enhanced by the artifices and unwarrantable practices of overgrown Farmers and Dealers in Grain, during all the laſt winter, and even nearly up to the commencement of the preſent harveſt. Inſomuch that, in the month of July, it was 40l. per load upon an average, in moſt parts of the kingdom; and on the 5th of the ſame month it ſold in Reading Market at the amazingly high price of 164s. per quarter, or 41l. the load. About this time the falſe and alarming cry of ſcarcity, which had deluded the people, and even the Government itſelf, for ſeveral months before, was renewed with redoubled force. The Farmers, Cornfactors, and Monopoliſts of Grain, throughout the kingdom, conſcious that they had large hoards by them, and that the importations continually flowing in, and the proſpect of a fine and abundant harveſt, muſt ſoon reduce the prices, reſolved to make a laſt effort. They all joined in a general declaration that the ſcarcity was extreme, that there was not Corn enough in the nation to ſerve till the harveſt, and

that before the new Grain could be thraſhed, and brought to market, Wheat would be 50l. per load. This was their *public* cry, but, knowing the very reverſe to be the fact, each of them *privately*, and individually, and *very prudently*, reſolved to take care of himſelf.

The Monopoliſts, many of whom had purchaſed imported Corn, to prevent its coming to a fair market, and lowering the price of the large hoards of Engliſh Wheat they had before ſtored up, began to bring ſome of their Corn, both Engliſh and foreign, to market: and the Farmers, from the ſame motives, began to thraſh and bring to market ſome of their's alſo, ſo long hoarded up in granaries, mows, and ſtacks. In ſhort, the ſame principle of avarice, and deſire of inordinate gain, which before was the cauſe of withholding the Grain, now operated in bringing it forward, each avaricious individual ſtriving to get the ſtart of the other of them, and obtain the beſt price poſſible, before the fall ſhould be general. The ſcarcity which many perſons, and even the Government itſelf before thought *real*, was now proved to be merely *artificial*; and that, by the beſt and cleareſt of all poſſible evidence, the production, by the farmers, of more Corn at the markets than had been known for a long ſeries of years.* Inſomuch, that on the 17th July, 1800, upwards of ſixty waggons, laden with Wheat, entered the town of Devizes, in Wilts, through one turnpike; and fifty-ſix ſample ſacks of Engliſh Wheat were pitched in Newbury market on the 17th; and one hundred

* This ſhews how fallacious the returns made to Government of the quantities of Corn in the different diſtricts were, and proves that Farmers, Clergymen poſſeſſing tythes, and capital Corn-Dealers are, by no means, the likelieſt perſons to give the moſt correct information on ſuch occaſions. But, if reapers, thraſhers, labourers, waggoners, and foremen to farmers, toll-collectors, and ſervants to millers, mealmen, and corn-dealers, and not their intereſted maſters, were queſtioned on ſuch ſubjects, by perſons properly authoriſed, ſatisfactory returns might be obtained.

and twenty on the 24th of the ſame month; though it had ſcarcely ever been known at the ſame ſeaſon of the year, that more than twenty ſample ſacks were pitched in that market. On the 26th, Wheat fell in Reading market thirty-five ſhillings per quarter, and a farmer ſold a load for 11l. 10s. leſs than he was offered for it on the preceding market-day. A baker, at Devizes, on the 24th, purchaſed a quantity of Wheat at 17s. per ſack leſs than he offered for the ſame Corn the preceding week; and, in general, throughout the kingdom, the markets were overcharged with Corn, the prices of which were rapidly ſinking.

To aſcertain the truth or fallacy of the opinion which prevailed in the month of June laſt, that large quantities of Grain were hoarded in warehouſes on both ſides of the River Thames, the Author took many excurſions up and down the river, at different times, to make inquiries. At firſt he met with conſiderable difficulties, but theſe he at length ſurmounted by means of trifling ſums, which he beſtowed on workmen and labourers, employed about the warehouſes and ſhips, whom he found could give information, but at firſt were backward in doing ſo; though many of them voluntarily declared all they knew upon the ſubject, without any other inducement than their abhorrence of the buſineſs by which neceſſity compelled them to get their bread. From the information of theſe perſons as far as reſpects warehouſes and uninhabited houſes, and as reſpecting ſhipping from Cuſtom-Houſe Officers, perſons belonging to the Eaſt-India Company, watermen, lightermen, carriers, and others; and by obtaining admiſſion himſelf into ſome of the warehouſes and ſhips, he was enabled to obtain a liſt of a great number of warehouſes, on both ſides of the River Thames, and of ſhips and barges on the River, as well as of uninhabited houſes in various parts of London and its environs, many of them filled with

flour, and the reſt with wheat.* And by means of Friends and Correſpondents, and certain journies taken by himſelf, he obtained a ſimilar liſt of warehouſes, and uninhabited houſes filled in like manner, in ſome other large trading towns. Such liſts, however, from motives of delicacy, and to conceal the names of perſons concerned, and particular ſituations of premiſes, he forbears to publiſh, leſt the pointing them out to the public at large ſhould excite to any outrage. He is, however, ready to produce his vouchers for the ſatisfaction of any reſpectable perſon, whom curioſity may induce to apply to him, in perſon, at his Chambers in Clement's-Inn, or at his houſe at Hare-Hatch, near Maidenhead, Berks. But, for the reaſons juſt mentioned, his Readers will excuſe his being more particular here, than adding the following general account of his diſcoveries on this head, (viz.)

UP THE RIVER,

From London Bridge to Nine Elms, both on the Middleſex and Surrey ſides of the River, he found a great number of warehouſes and many uninhabited houſes filled with wheat; and various mills, ſome of them worked by ſteam, and all of them having extenſive warehouſes containing flour and wheat; and from ſome of which, his informants aſſured him, large quantities of wheat and flour were frequently taken and conveyed away in the moſt private manner.

* *To the Editor of the Oracle and Daily Advertiſer.*

" SIR,

" IT is a matter of fact, that all the granaries and warehouſes from Dockhead to Cuckold's Point, are all full of Corn; inſomuch, that the dealers in that article have lately hired all the warehouſes in Greenland-Dock (formerly where blubber and train-oil were houſed) for the laudable purpoſe of filling them alſo with grain. I can vouch for the truth of this ſtatement; and am yours, &c.

Rotherhithe, 6th Oct. J. JACKSON."

DOWN THE RIVER,

From London Bridge, extending for miles downwards on the Middleſex and Eſſex, and alſo on the Kentiſh ſide of the River, the Author found a greater number of warehouſes, and many of them of much larger dimenſions, than thoſe above Bridge, and all completely ſtored with grain, principally wheat. From many of thoſe warehouſes great quantities of wheat were daily taken, put into craft, and ſecretly conveyed elſewhere. A number of ſhips were continually arriving in the River from Dantzick, Pruſſia, Sweden, Denmark, and other places, laden with cargoes of wheat. Many had been lying there a conſiderable time, the owners not being able to break bulk, for want of repoſitories, of any kind, to depoſit their cargoes of grain. And from the information of a Coal-Merchant, the Author learnt that he, having Coals in the Pool, could not hire a boat or craft of any kind to convey them up the River; ſo buſily employed were the lighters, barges, and boats, in carrying grain. And he declared that many other Coal-Dealers, as well as himſelf, laboured under the ſame inconvenience, and from the ſame cauſe. Barge and lighter loads of flour in barrels, taken from the mills and mill warehouſes, and other repoſitories, *and ſaid* to be for the uſe of Government, were daily put on board different veſſels, and were to be ſeen on all parts of the River, eſpecially below Bridge, which the watermen, lightermen, and carriers, informed the Author, were conveyed in ſuch large quantities, that it was the general opinion of themſelves and other perſons conſtantly employed on the River, that it could not be *all* for Government uſe, but that much of it muſt be ſent where it ſhould not.

Corn in many of the granaries and warehouſes on the River, both above and below Bridge, is repeatedly ſold to different perſons, who ſell it again; and

each ſucceſſive purchaſer ſometimes places a ſtick or mark, denoting it to be his property.

AT OTHER LARGE TRADING TOWNS,

By journies and excurſions taken by himſelf, and Inquiries made by the Author and his Friends and Correſpondents, in different parts of the kingdom, he found that not only in London, but likewiſe at Briſtol, Liverpool, and other parts of the kingdom, warehouſes and uninhabited houſes were filled with Flour, Wheat, and other Grain.

N. B. In the time of ſcarcity in 1795, and beginning of the year 1796, the Author alſo made like Excurſions and Inquiries up and down the River Thames, and in other places; and found the ſtate of the warehouſes much the ſame, as on his abovementioned Inquiries in June laſt.

Our anceſtors placed a due eſtimate on the bounties of heaven; they looked upon it as an act of piety and religion to guard againſt the machinations of man, who would counteract the goodneſs of GOD, for which purpoſe they paſſed the following Act of Parliament againſt

FORESTALLING, REGRATING, AND INGROSSING.

By Act Temp. Hen. III. Ed. I. and II. c. 10.* It is "Commanded on the behalf of our Lord the King, that no Foreſtaller be ſuffered to dwell in any town, which is an open oppreſſor of poor people, and of all the commonalty, and an enemy of the whole ſhire and country, which, for greedineſs of his private gain, doth prevent others in buying grain, fiſh, herring, or any other thing to be ſold, coming by land or water, oppreſſing the poor, and deceiving the rich, which carrieth away ſuch things, intending to ſell them more dear; the which come

* Not repealed by 12th Geo. III. c. 71.

to merchants, ſtrangers, that bring merchandiſe, offering them to buy, and informing them that their goods might be dearer ſold that they intended to ſell, and a whole town or a country is deceived by ſuch craft and ſubtilty. He that is convict thereof, the firſt time ſhall be amerced, and ſhall loſe the thing ſo bought, and that according to the cuſtom and ordinance of the town; he that is convict the ſecond time ſhall have judgment of the pillory; at the third time he ſhall be impriſoned and make fine; the fourth time he ſhall abjure the town. And this judgment ſhall be given upon all manner of Foreſtallers, and likewiſe upon them that have given them counſel, help, or favour."

Statute of the 3d and 4th Edward VI. c. 19,* § 1. Enacts, " That no perſon or perſons at any time, ſhall buy or commune and conclude to buy any manner of Oxen, Steers, Ronts, Kine, Heifers or Calves, but only in the open fair or market, where the ſame ſhall happen to be brought and put to ſale; and ſhall not ſell the ſame again alive at and in the ſame market or fair where he bought the ſame, during the time of the ſaid fair or market; upon pain of forfeiture of double value of ſuch Cattle bought or ſold contrary to the tenor of this preſent act."

§ 2.—" That it ſhall be lawful for all and every perſon and perſons to buy any Oxen, Steers, Ronts, Kine, Heifers and Calves, or any of them, out of any open Fair or Market, for his or their proviſion, for their houſhold, teem, or dairy, at his or their will or pleaſure, to be employed and ſpent only in keeping and maintenance of his or their houſe, or for their teem or dairy, and not otherwiſe."

§ 3.—" That no perſon, being a butcher, and uſing the craft or myſtery of butchery, ſhall at any time, buy any fat Oxen, Steers, Ronts, Kine, Heifers, Calves or Sheep, and ſell, or cauſe to be ſold, the ſame again alive, upon pain of forfeiture of every

* Not repealed by 12th George III.

ſuch Ox, Steer, Ront, Cow, Heifer, Calfe, or Sheep, bargained or ſold contrary to the form of this preſent act."

§ 4.—" That all and every perſon and perſons being a butcher, and uſing the art and myſtery of butchery, ſhall and may, at his and their will and pleaſure, buy any fat Oxen, Seers, Ronts, Kine, Heifers, Calves, and Sheep, or any of them, out of any open Fair or Market:—ſo that ſuch butcher ſell not, nor cauſe to be ſold, the ſame again alive, as is aforeſaid."

" One moiety of all which forfeitures ſhall be to our Sovereign Lord the King, his heirs and ſucceſſors, and the other moiety to him or them that will ſue for the ſame in any of the King's Courts of Record."

Statute of the 5th and 6th of Edward the VI. cap. 14. * Recites—That, " Albeit *divers* good ſtatutes heretofore have been made againſt Foreſtallers of merchandiſes and victuals, yet for that good laws and ſtatutes againſt Regrators and Ingroſſers of the ſame things have not been heretofore ſufficiently made and provided, and alſo for that it hath not been perfectly known what perſon ſhould be taken for a Foreſtaller, Regrator or Ingroſſer, the ſaid ſtatutes have not taken good effect, according to the minds of the makers thereof."

And enacts " That whatſoever perſon or perſons, that after the firſt day of *May* next coming, ſhall buy or cauſe to be bought any merchandiſe, victual, or any other thing whatſoever, coming by land or by water, toward any market or fair, to be ſold in the ſame, or coming toward any city, port, haven, creek or road, of this realm or *Wales*, from any parts beyond the ſea, to be ſold, or make any bargain, contract or promiſe, for the having or buying of the ſame or any part thereof, ſo coming, as is aforeſaid, before the ſaid merchandiſe, victuals or other things, ſhall be in the market, fair, city, port, haven, creek or

* Repealed with divers ſubſequent Acts on the ſame ſubject, by 12th Geo. III.

road, ready to be ſold; or ſhall make any motion by word, letter, meſſage or otherwiſe, to any perſon or perſons, for the inhancing of the price or dearer ſelling of any thing or things above mentioned, or elſe diſſwade, move, or ſtir any perſon or perſons coming to the market or the fair, to abſtain or forbear to bring or convey any of the things above rehearſed, to any market, fair, city, port, haven, creek or road to be ſold, as is aforeſaid, ſhall be deemed, taken, and adjudged a Foreſtaller."

2d.—" That whatſoever perſon or perſons, that after the ſaid firſt day of *May*, ſhall by any means regrate, obtain, or get into his or their hands or poſſeſſion, in any fair or market, any corn, wine, fiſh, butter, cheeſe, candles, tallow, ſheep, lambs, calves, ſwine, pigs, geeſe, capons, hens, chickens, pidgeons, conies, or other dead victual whatſoever, that ſhall be brought to any fair, or market within this realm or *Wales* to be ſold, and and do ſell the ſame again in any fair or market holden or kept in the ſame place, or in any other fair or market within four miles thereof, ſhall be accepted, reputed and taken for a Regrator or Regrators."

3d.—" That whatſoever perſon or perſons, that after the ſaid firſt day of *May*, ſhall ingroſs or get into his or their hands, by buying, contracting or promiſe taken, other than by demiſe, grant or leaſe of land or tithe, any corn growing in the fields, or any other corn or grain, butter, cheeſe, fiſh, or other dead victual whatſoever, within the realm of *England*, to the intent to ſell the ſame again, ſhall be accepted, reputed, and taken an unlawful Ingroſſer or Ingroſſers."

4th.—" And if any perſon or perſons ſhall, at any time after the ſaid firſt day of *May*, offend in any of the things before recited, and being thereof duly convicted and attainted by the laws of this realm, or after the form hereaftermentioned, ſhall for his or their firſt offence have or ſuffer impriſonment for the ſpace of two months without bail or mainpriſe,

and ſhall alſo loſe and forfeit the value of the goods, cattle, and victual ſo by him or them bought or had."

5th.—" And if any perſon lawfully convicted or attainted of or for any the offences above ſaid, be thereof eftſoons lawfully convicted or attainted, that then every perſon or perſons ſo offending ſhall have and ſuffer for his or their ſaid ſecond offence, impriſonment by the ſpace of one half year, without bail or mainpriſe, and ſhall loſe double the value of all the goods, cattle and victual ſo by him bought or had, as is aforeſaid."

6th.—" And if any perſon being lawfully twice convicted or attainted of or for any of the ſaid offences, ſhall eftſoons offend the third time, and be thereof lawfully convicted or attainted, that then every ſuch perſon for the ſaid third offence ſhall be ſet on the pillory in the city, town or place, where he ſhall then dwell and inhabit, and loſe and forfeit all the goods and cattle that he or they have to their own uſe, and alſo be committed to priſon, there to remain during the King's Majeſty's Pleaſure."

Act 31ſt George II. c. 40, §. 11,* Recites—That, whereas ſaleſmen, brokers or factors, employed by feeders of cattle or farmers, to ſell their live cattle within the city of *London*, or within the limits of the Weekly Bills of Mortality, may be guilty of many abuſes greatly to the prejudice of their employers, by indirectly ſelling ſuch cattle, by that means, ſtocking lands, which they may hire for that purpoſe near the Markets within the ſaid city of *London* or Weekly Bills of Mortality, where ſuch cattle may be brought to be ſold again, whenever they ſhall find a proper time or opportunity of ſelling the ſame to advantage; And enacts, " That from and after the 29th day of *September*, (1758,) no ſaleſman, or other broker or factor, who ſhall be employed to buy or ſell any ſort of cattle for others, by commiſſion, or for reward to

* Not repealed by 12th George III.

be paid or taken, ſhall by himſelf, or any ſervant or agent, directly or indirectly, on or for his own account, buy any live ox, bull, cow, ſteer, bullock, heifer, calf, ſheep, lamb, or ſwine, in *London*, or within the ſaid limits of the ſaid Weekly Bills of Mortality, or at any place whilſt any ſuch cattle ſhall be on the road, or be driving, bringing or coming up, to be ſold or offered to or for ſale in *London*, or at any other place within the ſaid limits of the ſaid Weekly Bills of Mortality (other than ſuch cattle which any ſuch ſaleſmen, broker, or factor, ſhall actually purchaſe for the neceſſary uſe or proviſion of his family, and ſhall actually uſe accordingly); and that no ſuch ſaleſman, broker, or factor, after the ſaid 29th day of *September*, ſhall ſell or expoſe, or offer to or for ſale, on his own account, in *London*, or at any place within the ſaid limits of the ſaid Weekly Bills of Mortality, either by himſelf, or his ſervant, or agent, any live ox, bull, cow, ſteer, bullock, heifer, calf, ſheep, lamb, or ſwine; upon pain that every perſon who ſhall ſo offend in the premiſſes ſhall—every time he ſhall be convicted of any ſuch offence in manner hereafter mentioned—forfeit and pay for every ſuch offence double the value of any live cattle, which he ſhall ſo buy or ſell, on his own account contrary to the tenor of this act."

Thus I have arranged as it were in review a chronological ſeries of thoſe Statutes which our forefathers enacted from time to time for the mutual advantage of the farmer and the conſumer, and under the ſhadow of which, GOD neither loſt the praiſe, nor man the benefit of his bounty; they were worded in the plaineſt language, not an ambiguous or colourable expreſſion in the whole; the temptation to avarice was cut off: nor does hiſtory record a ſingle inſtance of artificial ſcarcity of any duration as long as theſe ſalutary acts were permitted to retain their virtue. I ſhall now venture a few thoughts

on the reaſons which, in my opinion, led to the repeal of moſt of them.

The improvements in the various inſtruments employed in manufactures, which, at the ſame time that they abridge labour, multiply its effects: the mercantile ſpirit which explored new markets and enlarged old ones, totally changed the ſyſtem even of thinking, which had been obtained under former reigns; in conſequence of which many great and good men began to think that theſe Laws ought to be new modelled, and ſome conceived that they ſhould be entirely repealed; they thought all reſtrictive Laws trenched on private property; that a trading competition would never fail to procure an ample and cheap ſupply of proviſions, ſo that the price of every article would be ſure to find its own level, which it could not be expected to do while the trader was terrified with pains and penalties which the ſeverity of the Law hung over him. The ingenious Author of "The Wealth of Nations," ſeemed to make ſo light of this matter, that he confidently aſſerts, "That Foreſtalling and Regrating are no more to be dreaded than witchcraft." It is devoutly to be wiſhed that this was the caſe. The Hon. and Learned Daines Barrington, in his Obſervations on the ancient Statutes in 1766, (2d edit. p. 172,) alſo ſays, "I have already had occaſion to expreſs my ſentiments with regard to the laws againſt Foreſtallers and Regrators, and could *almoſt* wiſh that they were expunged from the Statute Book, as the conſequence of putting them in force muſt for ever be to raiſe the price of proviſions." Theſe are the ſentiments too of that luminous political œconomiſt, Dr. Adam Smith:—authorities undoubtedly great, and probably, as ſuch, had their due weight with the members of both houſes, on the propoſition for repealing thoſe Laws.

This ought to ſhew us at the ſame time, that great

names and ingenious theories, ought not to be haſtily adopted at the expence of the experience of ages; and that avarice, which is always ſure to find ſome heart inſenſible to the feelings of humanity, in which it uniformly takes up its abode, ought not to be permitted under any name to range at large, like a beaſt of prey, to "ſeek whom it may devour."

As the following article (taken from a morning paper) coincides with the Author's opinion, he only wiſhes that the ſpirit of it may be univerſally adopted:

"The town of Kidderminſter ſeems determined to ſtrike at the root of Monopoly: at a meeting of the principal inhabitants lately held there, it was reſolved, "That the baliff and juſtice be requeſted to write to his Grace the Duke of Portland, ſtating the hardſhips under which the induſtrious poor of that town laboured, on account of the high price of grain: and requeſting his Majeſty's Miniſters would recommend to the Legiſlature the re-enacting of the ſeveral Statutes againſt Foreſtalling, Regrating, Ingroſſing, &c. which have been within a few years repealed; and alſo to deviſe ſome means to prevent the Corn imported into this country from being bought up by monied men, who, inſtead of ſelling it to the immediate conſumer, diſpoſe of it to Corn-factors, whereby the price is advanced before it is brought into the market: and to requeſt his Majeſty's Miniſters to take ſuch other ſteps as may appear to them likely to reduce the price of proviſions, and (if poſſible) to prevent their riſing again to the ſame exorbitant height." We underſtand the Magiſtrates willingly agreed to comply with the above, and to ſend a letter to the Duke of Portland, conveying the ſentiments of the meeting.

I now come as it were with a degree of reluctance to the repealing Act of the 12th Geo. III. c. 21. This chapter Recites, that, "Whereas it hath been found by *experience*, that the reſtraints laid by ſeveral

ſtatutes upon the dealing in Corn, Meal, Flour, Cattle, and ſundry other ſorts of victuals, by preventing a free trade in the ſaid commodities, have a tendency to diſcourage the growth, and to enhance the price of the ſame; which ſtatutes, if put in execution, would bring a great diſtreſs upon the inhabitants of many parts of this kingdom, and in particular upon thoſe of the cities of *London* and *Weſtminſter*:"—

AND alſo enacts, "THAT an *Act*, made in the 3d and 4th year of King *Edward* the VIth, intituled, *An Act for buying and ſelling of Butter and Cheeſe*; and alſo an Act made in the 5th and 6th year of King *Edward* the VIth, intituled, *An Act againſt Regrators, Foreſtallers, and Engroſſers*; and alſo an Act, made in the 3d year of *Philip* and *Mary*, intituled, *An Act for the keeping of Milch Kine, and for breeding and rearing of Calves*; and alſo, an Act, made in the 5th year of Queen *Elizabeth*, intituled, *An Act touching Badgers of Corn, and Drovers of Cattle to be licenſed*; and alſo an Act, made in the 15th year of King *Charles* the IId. intituled, *An Act to prevent the ſelling of live fat Cattle by Butchers*; and ſo much of an Act, made in the 5th year of Queen *Anne*, intituled, *An Act for continuing the Laws therein mentioned relating to the Poor, and to the buying and ſelling of Cattle, in* Smithfield, *and for ſuppreſſing of Piracy*, as relates to butchers, ſelling cattle alive or dead, within the cities of *London* and *Weſtminſter*, or within ten miles thereof; and all Acts made for the better enforcement of the ſame, being detrimental to the ſupply of the labouring and manufacturing poor of this kingdom, ſhall be, and the ſame are hereby declared to be repealed."

AND it further enacts, "THAT all informations, indictments, ſuits, or proſecutions, already commenced, for the inflicting any puniſhment, or for the recovery of any fine, penalty, or forfeiture, under the ſaid former Acts, or any of them, ſhall ceaſe and determine; and no further proceedings ſhall be had thereupon: and that no information, indictment,

ſuit, or proſecution, ſhall be commenced or proſecuted againſt any perſon or perſons whatſoever, under or by virtue of the ſaid Acts, or any of them; but that all ſuch proceedings ſhall be void and of no effect, any law, ſtatute, or uſage to the contrary notwithſtanding."

It is fortunate for the public, that the above-mentioned Act, Temp. Hen. III. Ed. I. and II. and the 3d and 4th of Edw. VI. are older than any of the Acts enumerated in the Repealing Act above ſtated, and not noticed therein, *ſtill remain unrepealed.*

The Act of 12th Geo. III. only repeals the 3d and 4th of Edward the VIth, the 5th and 6th of the ſame king, the 3d of Philip and Mary, the 5th of Queen Elizabeth, and the 15th of Charles the IId. and ſo much of an Act made in the 5th year of Queen Anne, as related to butchers ſelling cattle alive or dead, within the cities of *London* and *Weſtminſter*, or within ten miles thereof; and all Acts made for the better enforcement of the ſame.

Conſequently, the Acts Temp. Hen. III. Ed. I. and II. and 3d and 4th of Ed. VI. are older than any of thoſe mentioned in the Repealing Act, and not in the leaſt noticed therein, could not be repealed by any words contained in it, ſince it only repeals the Acts therein particularized, and all Acts made *for the better enforcement of the ſame.* Nor is the before-mentioned Act, 31 Geo. II. repealed thereby, as not being made *for the better enforcement* of any of the Acts thereby ſpecified to be repealed.

Hence it follows, that the Act Temp. Hen. III. Ed. I. and II. 3d and 4th of Ed. VI. and alſo the Act 31 Geo. II. may be put in force to puniſh offences againſt theſe Acts reſpectively; or ſuch offenders may be indicted at Common Law, at the election of the Proſecutor.

How puniſhable by COMMON LAW.

At the common law, all endeavours whatſoever to enhance the common price of any merchandiſe,

and all kinds of practices which have an apparent tendency thereto, whether by ſpreading falſe rumours, or by buying things in a market before the accuſtomed hour, or by buying and ſelling again the ſame thing in the ſame market, or by any other ſuch like devices, are highly criminal, and puniſhable by fine and impriſonment. 1 *Haw.* 234 and 235.

By the common law, a merchant, bringing victuals into the realm, may ſell the ſame in groſs: but no perſon can lawfully buy within the realm any merchandiſe in groſs, and ſell the ſame in groſs again, without being liable to be indicted for the ſame. 3 *Inſt.* 196.

The bare ingroſſing of a whole commodity, with an intent to ſell it at an unreaſonable price, is an offence indictable at common law, and puniſhable by fine and impriſonment, whether any part thereof be ſold by the Ingroſſer or not. 1 *Haw.* 235.

And ſo jealous is the common law of all practices of this kind, that it will not ſuffer Corn to be ſold in the ſheaf; perhaps for this reaſon, becauſe by ſuch means the market is in effect foreſtalled. 1 *Haw.* 235.

CORN.

Mr. Yarringdon,* one of our earlieſt writers on Trade and Tillage, ſays, what experience has long ſince proved to be true, "That Corn is the main ſupport of Commerce, Manufactures, and Arts, and that a market will be always found for Grain and Iron in every part of the world. There was no kind of misfortune that the Romans deprecated with ſo much fervour as famine,† in order to prevent

* The Biſhop of Llandaff, (Dr. *Watſon,*) ſays, that a ſtatute of gold ought to be raiſed to the memory of Yarringdon.

† Urbium regionumque graviſſimus morbus fames eſt cujus vires oportet frangere, ne nimium auctus deleat.

Philo Judæus Joſeph. fol. 542.

Fame confici, miſerrima mors eſt, qua nihil miſerius eſt, peſti-

ſuch a dreadful ſcourge, they created what they called a *Præfectus Annonæ*, whoſe office, as *Suetonius* tells us, was to diſtribute Corn to the people in times of ſcarcity. Should we not, therefore, profit by the example of thoſe that went before us; eſpecially as it ſhews the attention the Romans, even in the zenith of domain, paid to the wants of the lower orders of the ſtate.

As bread figuratively is called the ſtaff of life, being the ſupport of old and young, I thought it would be neceſſary to enter more at large into that ſubject. All civilized and well regulated nations have paid the utmoſt attention to the growth, importation of Corn, &c. and its preſervation for uſe or ſale, as well as the preparation of it for food, by grinding and baking. All that can be reaſonably expected from the united wiſdom of the Legiſlature, with reſpect to Grain, is to frame ſuch laws as will prevent Corn from being at any time, either ſo dear that the poor cannot ſubſiſt, or ſo cheap that the farmer cannot live by growing it.—This is the GOLDEN MEAN in which our anceſtors ſteered for many ages. In almoſt every one of the old ſtatutes, which attempt any regulations in the Corn Trade, this maxim was uniformly acted upon; ſo that, whilſt they ſedulouſly guarded againſt any thing which might tend to diſtreſs the poor, they took care that tillage ſhould not be diſcouraged:—but thoſe were the happy days in which ſmall farms were in faſhion. Many acts were wiſely paſſed for the regulation of Corn in different reigns, as may be ſeen in the following liſt, which I have drawn up, that the reader may have the whole at one view:—

lentia triſtior eſt, quovis hoſte humano truculentior eſt. Fol. 1285, & ſeq. *Caſp. Barth. Libr.* ix. Cap. 11.

Quam unam, ſuperatis omnibus humanis malis, natura vinci non ſinit. *Liv.* v. 48. 5.

LIST OF THE STATUTES RELATIVE TO CORN.

YEAR.	KINGS.	CAP.	GENERAL PURPORT.
1534	25 Hen. VIII.	2,	—Regulating the price of Victuals.
1552	5 and 6 Ed. VI.	14,	—Againſt *Ingroſſers*, &c.
1553	1 & 2 P. & M.	5,	—Allowing exportation of Wheat till 6s. 8d. per quarter, and other Grain at proportionate fixed prices.
1562	5 Eliz.	12,	—Alters 5 and 6 Edw. VI. in regard to buyers.
1570	13 Eliz.	13,	—Regulates exportation, &c.
1604	2 Jam. I.	13,	—The ſame.
1623	12 Jam. I.	28,	—The ſame, and alters 5 and 6 Edw. VI. ſtill more.
1627	3 Cha. I.	4,	—Nearly a repetition of the laſt, and allows exports to 32 ſhillings.
1660	12 Cha. II.	4,	—Relates to export, and allows it to 40 ſhillings.
1563	15 Cha. II.	7,	—The ſame, and alters or ſuſpends 5 and 6 Edw. VI. till Wheat is 48 ſhillings, to which it allows export.
1670	22 Cha. II.	13,	—Allows export 53 ſhillings and four-pence, after paying cuſtoms, &c.
1685	1 Jam. II.	19,	—Regulates the manner of aſcertaining the prices according to which cuſtom on the importation is to be paid.
1688	1 W. & M.	12,	—Gives bounty and repeals cuſtom on export to 48 ſhillings.
1698	10 W. III.	3,	—From February 10 no export for one year.
1699	11 W. III.	3,	—From February 19 no bounty for nearly nine months.

1700	11 & 12 W. III.	20,—No cuſtom on export.
1706	5 Anne,	29,—Gives bounty on Oatmeal and Wheat Malt.
1709	8 Anne,	2,—No export for one year.
1729	2 Geo. II.	18,—Relates to importation.
1732	5 Geo. II.	12,—The ſame, and amends 1 Jam. II. c. 19.
1738	1 Geo. II.	22,—Made felony to hinder exportation.
1740	4 Geo. II.	3,—No export for one year.
1741	5 Geo. II.	35,—No export for one year.
1757	30 Geo. II.	3,—No export till 25th of December 1757.
....	.....	7,—Import allowed till Auguſt 24th 1757, duty free.
....	31 Geo. II.	1,—No export till 24th December, 1758.
1759	32 Geo. II.	2,—No export till 24th December, 1759, but ſubject to alteration.
....	.....	8,—Repealed after 25th March, 1759.
1765	5 Geo. III.	31,—No bounty on export or duty on import of Wheat, &c. for a limited time.
1765	5 Geo. III.	32,—The King and Council may prohibit the export of Wheat, &c. during next receſs of Parliament.
1766	6 Geo. III.	3,—Wheat may be imported from America, duty free, for a limited time.
....	.....	4,—Importation of Oats and Oatmeal, duty free, ditto.
....	.....	5,—Export of Wheat prohibited, ditto.

On CORN-MARKETS, *and the* pernicious *conſequences of ſelling by* Sample.*

THE ancient and laudable practice of pitching Corn in the Markets was a moſt beneficial cuſtom. It is ſtill continued in ſome market towns; and, where it can be proved to have been the ancient cuſtom, it may be enforced by the Common Law of the Land.

But unfortunately, in far the greater number of Corn-Markets, which originally were Pitching-Markets, the ancient mode of *pitching* Corn has been diſcontinued for a long ſeries of years, and the pernicious cuſtom of *ſelling by Sample* ſubſtituted in its ſtead.

Hence it has happened, in many inſtances, that Markets which were formerly Pitching-Markets, are by lapſe of time, irrecoverably loſt; the modern practice of ſelling by Sample, though at firſt an innovation, having been negligently ſuffered to prevail for ſo long a time, that the old people, who could have proved them to have been formerly Pitching-Markets, are dead, and, for want of their evidence, it would be extremely difficult, if not wholly impoſſible, at leaſt in many inſtances, to re-eſtabliſh the ancient cuſtom.

Nothing, then, can now reſtore the practice, ſo as to render it univerſal, but a *new law*; and, conſidering the very pernicious conſequences reſulting from ſelling by Sample, the Legiſlature could not, perhaps, render the Public a more eſſential ſervice than by enacting a Law, *declaring all Markets, ancient and modern, where Corn either has been, or hereafter ſhall be ſold, Pitching Markets, and* PROHIBITING, under

* This ſubject is treated at length in the larger Work, from which this is abridged.

an effectual penalty, the ſelling Corn BY SAMPLE, *in* ANY MARKET WHATEVER.

The practice of ſelling Corn by Sample deprives the middle and lower claſſes of the people, and indeed every body elſe, of the means of purchaſing Corn in ſmall quantities, which in former times, when Pitching-Markets were in general uſe, were never refuſed by the ſellers.

Any man could then go to market, and purchaſe any ſmall quantity he pleaſed, and had nothing more to do than to take it to the next Mill, and have it ground, for the ſupply of his family with good and wholeſome bread of his own baking.

All contracts, made from ſample, are for loads and large quantities:—a few rich Millers and other Dealers attend in the parlour of an inn or public houſe, where they are met by the Farmers, who bring with them each a ſmall canvas bag, ſomething larger than a money purſe, containing a few *grains* of *Corn*, which they call a *ſample*; and the *purſe* which contains it, a *ſample bag*.

On view of one of theſe ſamples, the Miller or other Dealer agrees with the Farmer for the purchaſe of as many loads of wheat as the Farmer has ready for ſale, and as the Miller or Dealer is willing to purchaſe, at a price or prices agreed on between them, to be delivered in quality agreeable to the ſample, at ſuch time or times as they agree on; that is, at ſuch time or times as it ſhall ſuit the Farmer to get it ready for delivery, and the purchaſer to receive it.

Thus the Market is *foreſtalled*, the Corn, inſtead of being brought into it, is carried from the Farmer's barn, by the neareſt road, to the mill, or a private granary of the purchaſer; and thus a few opulent Millers, and other rich Dealers, command the whole Corn Trade of the diſtrict, and monoplize the Grain.

This evil is enhanced by the temptation it holds out to monied men to ſpeculate in Grain, and hence

not only Millers, but rich Farmers, and other perſons of property, become ſpeculators in Corn; (and, what is worſe, often agree for it to be delivered at a future period). Thus they ingroſs it into their own hands, and withhold it from the uſe of the Public till they obtain ſuch advanced prices and exorbitant profits upon it as they pleaſe.

This buſineſs of ſpeculative Monopoly, and bargaining for Corn to be delivered at future periods, at certain prices, is much aided and facilitated by Country Banking Houſes, the owners of which are often ſpeculators in Grain themſelves, or cloſely connected with other perſons who are.—Thus ſpeculations can be, and frequently are, carried to a much greater extent (by the aſſiſtance of Paper Credit) than the fortunes of the perſons concerned would otherwiſe ſupport.

The preſent ſtate of our Markets has often employed my thoughts; and, as it is confeſſed on all hands that they ſtand in need of new Regulations, I have ventured, with great diffidence, to ſubmit the following to the conſideration of wiſer heads:

1ſt. That no Corn or Grain, of any kind whatever, ſhall be ſold or purchaſed, or the property thereof changed, by any contract or agreement whatever, other than in ſome public market, where one ſack at leaſt, as a ſample of each load to be ſold, ſhall be publicly pitched in the market, and all the reſidue of the Corn ſo to be ſold ready at hand, in the ſame town, for delivering to the purchaſer or purchaſers.

2dly. That no perſon ſhall expoſe Corn to ſale in any other way whatever than by ſo pitching a ſample ſack of each load in the market, and having the whole in the ſame market town ready for delivery: —to which end every market in the nation, where Corn has been, or ſhall be expoſed for ſale, ſhall be declared and deemed a Pitching Market.

3dly, That all Corn ſo ſold ſhall be delivered by the ſeller to the buyer in open market;—and it ſhall be highly penal for the buyer to ſell, or expoſe for

ſale, or contract to ſell or deliver the ſame Corn to any other perſon or perſons at the ſame market, or to hoard up the ſame, or depoſit it in a warehouſe, and afterwards expoſe it for ſale at an advanced price, at the ſame or any future market in the ſame town.

4thly, That to the end the inhabitants of every market town, and its ſurrounding neighbourhood, may be ſupplied with Corn in ſmall quantities for the uſe of their families, they ſhould have a right to demand it in any ſmall quantity they pleaſe, to be ſold and delivered to them by the owner, out of any larger quantity expoſed for ſale in the market, either before ſale, and when in the hands of the original owner, or after ſale, of ſuch larger quantity, in the hands of any purchaſer thereof;—and both buyer and ſeller of any ſuch larger quantity of Corn, to the amount of a load or more when in their reſpective cuſtodies, ſhould be obliged, under a ſevere penalty, to divide out and take from the ſame as many ſmall quantities as ſhall be applied for;—and no ſuch large quantity of Corn ſhould be ſuffered to be taken from the market till all the ſmall buyers ſhall be firſt ſupplied,—and that too at the loweſt prices which Corn of the ſame quality ſhall bear in large quantities.

But not only as reſpecting the mart of Corn, but likewiſe with regard to cattle and animal food of all deſcriptions, or any other neceſſary article of life, ſhould ever be ſuffered to be ſold in any other way than in open market; and by no means be ſuffered to be collected by any middle perſon whatever, or to paſs through the hands of any middle perſon, till after being firſt ſold by the original owners in public market.

The preſent modes of ſupplying the Metropolis are propoſed to be put an end to—becauſe they are pernicious and baneful.

As the ſupply of the Cities of London and Weſtminſter, and their appendages, in their preſent increaſed ſtate of population, require the aſſiſtance of very remote parts of the iſland, it is therefore by no

means intended to prevent any Dealers or Contractors living in London, or concerned in ſupplying it, with any neceſſary article or articles of life, from making purchaſes themſelves, or by Country Agents, at any market whatever, however remote from the Metropolis:—provided all ſuch purchaſes are made in open Market, and under proper reſtrictions. By which every original owner and producer of the neceſſary articles of life, being obliged to bring his produce to a neighbouring market, every country market will be plentifully ſupplied.

And that they may be not only *plentifully* but *reaſonably* ſupplied, it would be highly convenient and ſalutary, that not only all the markets in the nation, but likewiſe fairs, ſuch as Magdalen Hill and Wey Hill fairs, in all towns for the ſale of Heifers, Sheep, Calves, Cheeſe, Hops, Bacon, or any other article of life, ſhould be regulated in like manner as the markets are propoſed to be.

Formerly any perſon could, at ſuch fairs, as well as at the markets, purchaſe a ſingle hundred or half hundred of Cheeſe, or even a ſingle Cheeſe, or a Flitch or half Flitch of Bacon, or ſmall pocket of Hops;—but now, any application by an individual, either at market or fair, for any ſuch ſmall quantity, is ſure to be anſwered by an inſult, and he is told that the whole lot has been bought up by ſome London contractor, or other monopolizing wholeſale dealer.

Hence it is abſolutely neceſſary to prohibit and prevent any large or conſiderable quantity of any neceſſary article of life whatever from being taken out of any market or fair till after it ſhall have remained there for a convenient period of time; and that, during all the time ſo to be ſtipulated for it to remain, any perſon or perſons whatever ſhall be ſerved by the proprietor of it, whether the firſt owner, before ſale, or any purchaſer to whom it may be ſold in groſs, with any ſmall quantity or quantities

demanded, and at the fair market price, of a large quantity of equal goodneſs.

Such a well-regulated ſyſtem of enforcing every neceſſary article of life to be brought to market by the growers and producers for the ſupply, in the firſt inſtance, of the neighbouring inhabitants; and which, by the bye, would be nothing more than a revival of the wiſe cuſtoms of our anceſtors, would effectually do away ſome of the moſt heinous evils and extortions which now afflict the land.

On the contrary, each of ſuch ſubordinate dealers would then have it in his power to ſupply himſelf immediately from the country producer, and not from a graſping Monopoliſt.

Thus a competition would ſpring up amongſt a numerous body of Dealers, all purchaſing at the beſt hand, and no longer under the controul of monopolizing maſters;—and London, as well as the country, would conſequently be benefited to an incalculable degree.

On WINCHESTER MEASURE.

As it would be extremely beneficial if the ſtandard, called Wincheſter Meaſure, was enforced throughout the kingdom, it may not be improper to inſert extracts from the Acts of 22d and 23d of Cha. II. on that ſubject, and then add ſome uſeful hints or obſervations on the utility of enforcing ſuch part of them as require the BUSHEL OR MEASURE TO BE SHAKEN BY THE BUYER, a regulation ſo ſalutary that it is ſtrange it ſhould have been ſuffered to fall into diſuſe.

This *good old law*, like many others, beſpeaks the wiſdom of our anceſtors, in conſtantly making the admonitions and injunctions recorded in Holy Writ, the baſis whereon to ſuperſtruct for the *public good*; and here, no doubt, the ſapient Law-givers had an immediate eye to the advice ſo forcibly given by our Saviour while preaching to the people, viz.

"Give, and it ſhall be given unto you, *good* mea-

ſure, *preſſed* down, and *ſhaken* together, and *running over*, ſhall men give into your boſom. For with the *ſame* meaſure that *ye* mete withal, *it ſhall be meaſured to you again.*"—Luke, chap. vi. ver. 38.

By the 22d Cha. II. *c.* 8. § 2.—If any perſon or perſons ſhall *ſell* any Corn or Grain, ground or unground, or any Salt, by any other buſhel or meaſure than the ſtandard, (ſealed,) *Wincheſter* meaſure, containing eight gallons to the buſhel, ſtricken even by the brim of the ſame by the ſeller, he or they ſhall forfeit for every ſuch offence FORTY SHILLINGS, on conviction, before one Juſtice, on the oath of one witneſs; to be levied by the Churchwardens and Overſeers, or ſome of them, to the uſe of the poor by diſtreſs and ſale. In default of diſtreſs, impriſonment till payment.

Same Act, § 3.—If any Mayor, or other head Officer of any City, Borough, Corporation, or Liberty, ſhall knowingly permit any perſon or perſons to ſell or buy any Corn or Grain, ground or unground, or Salt, by any other buſhel or meaſure, or ſtricken in any other manner than is thereby preſcribed, or ſhall ſuffer within their reſpective juriſdictions, any other meaſure to be uſed; or if upon complaint of the breach of this ſtatute, he or they ſhall not duly puniſh and reform the ſame according to the purport thereof, he or they, for every ſuch offence, upon due proof and conviction thereof, by preſentment or indictment, before the Juſtices of the Peace of the county where ſuch offence ſhall be committed, at the General Seſſions of the Peace, ſhall forfeit *Five* Pounds, one *half* to the informer or proſecutor, and the other *half* to the poor of the pariſh; to be levied by diſtreſs and ſale of the offender's goods and chattels, and for default of diſtreſs, impriſonment till payment.

By Act 22d and 23d Cha. II. *c.* 12, § 2,—Every perſon or perſons who ſhall ſell or buy any Corn, *ground or unground*, or Salt, without meaſuring, being thereunto required, or in any manner being there-

unto required, or in any other manner than by the ſaid Act directed, and *without ſhaking the buſhel or meaſure by the buyer*, ſhall forfeit and loſe, beſide the penalty of the former Act, (22d Cha. II.) all Corn, Grain, or Salt, bought or ſold contrary to this Act, or the value thereof, to the perſon or perſons complaining.

The Words, *Corn ground* and *unground*, compreprehend all ſorts of Corn and Meal into which Corn may be ground; and of courſe *Wheat* and *Flour*, *Barley* and *Barley Meal*, *Oats* and *Oat Meal*; and *Salt* alſo, the latter being particularly ſpecified in the laſt abſtracted ſection, are *all of them*, when meaſured, TO BE SHAKEN; *and the buyer has a right to inſiſt on ſhaking the buſhel or other meaſure himſelf*; and not only large *wholeſale quantities* meaſured by the buſhel, but likewiſe *quarts*, *pints*, and *half-pints*, *and other ſmall quantities*, ſold by retail, are all within the letter and meaning of the law; and tranſgreſſors in ſmall caſes are ſubject to like penalties as in larger ones,—that is, by the laſt abſtracted Section of the 22d and 23d Cha. II. the ſeller forfeits the articles ſold, and incurs the penalty of forty ſhillings, ſpecified in the Act 22 Cha. II. *c.* 8, § 2, therein referred to.

The ſhaking Corn, Meal, Salt, or indeed almoſt any other article, in the meaſure, makes an immenſe difference;—and in particular in the articles of Wheat, and other Grain and Meal produced from all ſorts of Grain.

With reſpect to the *buyer's right* to *ſhake the meaſure*;—and alſo to ſelling by any other meaſure than the *Wincheſter buſhel*, it may be uſeful to inſert in this place, the opinion and judgment of the Court of King's Bench, in the caſe of *The King* v. *J. Major*.—T. T. 32 Geo. III.

This was a conviction on the before-mentioned ſtatutes of 22d and 23d Cha. II. of the defendant, *Major*, for buying Corn at *Newport*, in the *Iſle of Wight*, by a buſhel different from the *Wincheſter*

meaſure. It being a queſtion of general concern, the *Court* took time to conſider of it, after which Lord *Kenyon*, C. J. delivered the opinion of the Court as follows:—

"We have hitherto delayed giving judgment in "this caſe, in the hope of diſcovering that the far- "mers in general have been acting under a miſtake; "for it is a matter of notoriety, that in different "parts of the country, Corn is ſold by different "meaſures, ſome greater and others leſs than the "*Wincheſter* meaſure. This queſtion depends on 22d "Cha. II. *c.* 8, and the 22d and 23d Cha. II. *c.* 12. "The former impoſes a penalty of forty ſhillings on "any perſon who ſhall ſell Corn or Grain, uſually "ſold by the buſhel, by any other buſhel or meaſure "than the *Wincheſter* meaſure; the latter recites the "former Act, and in order to enforce it, ſubjects "both the buyer and ſeller to an accumulative pe- "nalty, the value of the Corn ſold."

"Theſe Acts are expreſſed in the moſt poſitive "terms; and it was admitted in the argument, that "there was no ſubſequent law which directly repealed "them. But ſeveral other ſtatutes for the regulation "of the Corn Trade were referred to, directing re- "turns of the average price of Corn to be made, "and noticing in thoſe returns a cuſtomary mea- "ſure. Theſe, it was argued obliquely, though not "directly, repealed the ſtatutes of Cha. II. We have "conſidered this matter very fully, and are of opi- "nion, that the argument does not lead to that con- "cluſion. We cannot get rid of thoſe poſitive laws "by a reference to ſubſequent ſtatutes which were "paſſed for another purpoſe, and which leave the "former ones ſtill in force."—Conviction affirmed, *Durnf. and Eaſt*, Vol. IV. p. 750.

And in addition to this caſe, it may likewiſe be uſeful to add that of the *King* v. *Arnold*, on the proſecution of Robert Booth, T. T. 33 Geo. III. which was a conviction before *Launcelot Brown* and *Henry Poynter Stanley*, Eſquires, two Juſtices of the Peace for the county of *Huntingdon*, againſt the defendant,

for buying Wheat by a measure different from the *Winchester* measure, " Whereby the said Justices " *adjudge that the said Joseph Arnold hath for his said* " *offence forfeited the sum of* 3*l.* 19*s.* 6*d. being the* " *value of the said Wheat so bought by him as* " *aforesaid to be applied and distributed according to* " *law*; *and also adjudge that the said* Joseph Arnold " *hath forfeited for his said offence, the further sum of* " *Forty Shillings, to be applied and distributed accord-* " *ing to law: and we do further adjudge, that the* " *said Joseph Arnold do forthwith pay to the said* " Robert Booth *the sum of Twelve Shillings for the* " *costs in and about the premises.*"

—*Sellon* took several objections to this conviction: 1st, The defendant is convicted in Forty Shillings, besides the value of the Corn, whereas he is only liable to the latter penalty inflicted by 22d and 23d Cha. II. *c.* 12. The first Act, 22d Cha. II. *c.* 8, only effects the *seller*. 2dly, The quantity of Corn bought is not sufficiently ascertained, nor is any price fixed on it in the information. 3dly, The offence is charged to be contrary to the *Statute*; whereas, *if* the defendant be liable to both the penalties, it is contrary to *two Statutes*. 4thly, The defendant is adjudged to pay costs; whereas, none are given by the statutes.—*Lens contra*, after referring to the 18th Geo. III. *c.* 19, which enables justices to give costs in their discretion, was stopped by the Court.

Lord *Kenyon*, C. J.—" I am sorry that the obsti- " nacy of the farmers, in some parts of the King- " dom, has partly defeated the provisions of the " statutes of Cha. II. because, after the case of " *K. v. Major*, (above) was decided, we had an " opportunity of knowing from the grand juries in " different counties, that the decision gave great " satisfaction. In order to decide this case, we have " only to look at the very words of the statute 22d " and 23d Cha. II. which expressly subjects the " buyer to both the penalties; for it is thereby

" enacted, that the buyer ſhall forfeit and loſe, be-
" ſides the penalty of the former Act, all Corn
" bought, &c. that is, he is to forfeit the value of
" the Corn, in addition to the penalty of Forty
" Shillings, impoſed by the former Act. Nor is
" there any objection in ſaying that this forfeiture is
" an offence againſt the form of the ſtatute; for all
" that reſpects the buyer is prohibited by 22d and
" 23d Cha. II. On reading over the caſe at firſt, I
" thought that the objection intended to be taken
" was, that the evidence did not ſupport the charge;
" but I obſerve, that the proof of buying according
" to the regulations of the ſtatute is, by § 3, thrown
" on the defendant."

Aſhhurſt, J.—Concurred.

Buller, J.—" The ſtatute 22d and 23d Cha. II.
" *c.* 12, inſtead of ſaying expreſsly that the buyer
" ſhall be liable to the penalty of Forty Shillings,
" and to a forfeiture of the Corn ſo bought, has ſaid
" the ſame thing impliedly; for it ſays that he ſhall
" forfeit and loſe, beſides the penalty of the former
" Act, (which is a penalty of forty ſhillings,) the
" Corn ſo bought, &c. With regard to the objec-
" tions, that the quantity is not ſufficiently aſcer-
" tained, an information before two Magiſtrates need
" not be more particular than an information filed
" in this court; and, in the latter caſe, an allegation
" that the defendant 'bought a quantity of wheat,
" containing, to wit, fifteen buſhels,' would be ſuf-
" ficiently certain; and here the evidence has parti-
" culariſed it."—*Per cur.*—Conviction affirmed.—
Durnf. and Eaſt, Vol. V. p. 353.

By Act 22d and 23d Cha. II. *c.* 12, § 3,—On complaint being made to a Juſtice of the Peace, that any kind of Corn, ground or unground, or Salt, hath been bought, ſold, or delivered, contrary to this Act, the proof ſhall lie upon the defendant, to make it appear by the oath of one witneſs, that he ſold or bought the ſame lawfully.

By the 13th Will. III. *c.* 5, a legal *Winchester*

buſhel, according to the ſtandard in the Exchequer, ſhall be round, with a plain bottom, eighteen inches and an half wide throughout, and eight inches deep.

By 31ſt Geo. III. *c.* 30, § 82, the buſhel by which all Corn ſhall be meaſured and computed, ſhall be the *Wincheſter* buſhel, and a quarter ſhall conſiſt of eight buſhels; and the Juſtices of each county, and the Mayor of ſuch cities or towns as are counties of themſelves, or enjoy exempt juriſdictions, and from which returns are by this Act directed to be made, ſhall cauſe a ſtandard *Wincheſter* buſhel to be provided and kept; and all meaſure ſhall be computed by the ſtricken, and not by the heaped buſhel: And where Corn ſhall be ſold by weight, fifty-ſeven pounds averdupois, of Wheat, ſhall be deemed equal to one *Wincheſter* buſhel; and fifty-five pounds of Rye; forty-eight pounds of Barley; forty-two pounds of Beer or Bigg, and thirty-eight pounds of Oats; and further, that fifty-ſix pounds of Wheat Meal, forty-five pounds of Wheat Flour, fifty-three pounds of Rye Meal, forty-eight pounds of Barley Meal, forty-one pounds of Beer or Bigg Meal, and twenty-two pounds of Oat Meal, ſhall be deemed equal to every ſuch buſhel of Corn unground. And for the more eaſy meaſuring ground corn in ſacks, the proper officer may make choice of and weigh two ſacks out of any number not exceeding twenty, and ſo in proportion, and thereby compute the quantity of the whole.

Weights and Measures in general.

As the preceding obſervations have been principally confined to the Wincheſter meaſure, as reſpecting *Corn ground* and *unground*, and *Salt*; we ſhall conclude this ſubject by adding ſome uſeful laws concerning *Weights* and *Meaſures* in general.

By the common law, ſelling by falſe weights or meaſures is an offence puniſhable by indictment, fine, and impriſonment.

By the 8th Hen. VI. *c.* 5, in every city, borough,

and town, ſhall be a common balance, with common weights, ſealed, and according to the ſtandard of the Exchequer, upon the common coſts of ſuch city, borough, or town, in the keeping of the Mayor or Conſtable, on pain of 10l. for ſuch city making default, borough 5l. and town where a conſtable is 40s.

At which balance all the inhabitants may freely weigh without paying any thing; taking, nevertheleſs, of foreigners for every draught within the weight of forty pounds, a farthing, and for every draught betwixt forty and one hundred pounds, an halfpenny, and for every draught betwixt one hundred and one thouſand pounds, a penny at the moſt.

And Juſtices of the Peace, Mayors, Bailiffs, and Stewards of Franchiſes, may inquire of offenders againſt this ordinance, and do execution of them that be found faulty by inqueſts, or by their own examination.

By the 22d and 23d Cha. II. *c.* 12, § 4,—The clerk of the market, and where there is none, the Mayor, or head Officer, or other perſon having benefit of the Market, ſhall cauſe to be ſealed all meaſures duly gauged, brought to them for that purpoſe.

And by Act 22d Cha. II. *c.* 8, § 3 and 4, If any Mayor, Lord of the Liberty, or other perſon authoriſed to mark or ſeal meaſures, ſhall neglect or refuſe, being required, to ſeal or mark any buſhel, half buſhel, or peck, duly guaged, he ſhall forfeit for the firſt offence 5*l.* and for every other offence 10*l.* on conviction, by preſentment or indictment, at the county ſeſſions, half to the proſecutor, and half to the poor; to be levied by diſtreſs; and for default of diſtreſs, to be impriſoned by warrant of the Juſtices at ſuch ſeſſions, till payment be made.

By 16th Cha. II. *c.* 19, § 2, Whoever ſhall ſell by any other weight, meaſure, or yard, not according to the ſtandard, or keep any ſuch whereby any thing is bought or ſold, ſhall forfeit 5*s.* on convic-

tion before one Juſtice, Mayor, or other head officer, on oath of one witneſs; to be levied by the Church-wardens and Overſeers, or ſome, or one of them, to the uſe of the poor, by diſtreſs; in default of diſtreſs, impriſonment till paid.

But by 22d Cha. II. *c.* 8, § 2, Water meaſure, (*viz.* five pecks to the buſhel, *Dalt.* C. 112) in ſea-port towns, ſhall continue as uſual; except in the meaſuring of Corn or Grain, ground or unground, and Salt.

By Act 37th Geo. III. *c.* 143, § 1, "The Juſtices of the Peace at their reſpective petty ſeſſions, within the diviſions, diſtricts, and other places of the ſeveral counties in *England* and *Wales*, are to appoint one or more perſon or perſons, who ſhall have power to examine the weights and balances within ſuch diviſions, diſtricts, and other places reſpectively."

Sec. 2. "The perſon or perſons ſo to be appointed, are authorized and required, (having firſt been ſworn duly and faithfully to execute the office, which oath ſuch Juſtices are hereby authoriſed and empowered to adminiſter,) as often as the ſaid Juſtices ſhall direct, in the day time, to enter into the ſhop, mill, houſe, outhouſes, and other premiſes, ſtall, or ſtanding place of any perſon or perſons who ſhall ſell by retail and weight any wares, proviſions, goods, or chattels whatſoever, and then and there to ſearch for, view, and examine, all weights and balances in ſuch ſhop, mill, houſe, outhouſes, and premiſes, ſtall or ſtanding place, and to ſeize any weight or weights, not being according to the ſtandard in the Exchequer, or any falſe, or unequal balance or balances, and to detain the ſame, to be produced before the Juſtices in petty ſeſſions, as aforeſaid, upon the hearing of the information o informations hereinafter mentioned; and the perſon or perſons, in whoſe ſhop, mill, houſe, outhouſes, premiſes, ſtall, or ſtanding place, any ſuch defective weight or weights, or any ſuch falſe or unequal

balance or balances, ſhall be found, (againſt whom, for ſuch offence or offences, an information or informations is and are hereby directed to be preferred,) ſhall, upon conviction thereof in petty ſeſſions as aforeſaid, upon view or confeſſion, or upon the oath of one or more credible witneſs or witneſſes, forfeit and pay, for every ſuch offence, any ſum of money not exceeding twenty ſhillings, nor leſs than five ſhillings, as the ſaid Juſtices before whom ſuch perſon or perſons ſhall have been convicted, ſhall, in their diſcretion, order and adjudge, together with the coſts and charges attending ſuch conviction, ſuch forfeiture, together with ſuch coſts and charges, to be levied by warrant under the hands and ſeals of the ſaid juſtices, by diſtreſs and ſale of ſo much of the goods and chattels of the perſon or perſons offending, as ſhall be ſufficient to pay the ſaid penalty, and alſo the expenſes of making ſuch diſtreſs and ſale."

Sec. 3. "On the conviction of ſuch offender or offenders, the ſaid Juſtices ſhall cauſe ſuch defective weight or weights, or ſuch falſe or unequal balance or balances, to be forthwith broken and rendered uſeleſs, and the materials thereof to be ſold, and the money, as well as forfeitures, applied in the manner therein mentioned."*

Sec. 4. "If the majority of the inhabitants of any pariſh, townſhip, or place, within ſuch county, riding, or diviſion, ſhall be deſirous that any perſon or perſons ſhall be ſpecially appointed to examine the weights and balances within ſuch pariſh, townſhip, or place, it ſhall be lawful for ſuch inhabitants, and they are hereby empowered, (at a veſtry to be duly holden for that purpoſe,) to nominate one or more ſubſtantial houſe-holder, or houſe-holders, to be approved of and appointed by the ſaid Juſtices at

* For ſuch application and other particulars, too prolix to be inſerted here, ſee the Act, and alſo the Act 35th Geo. III. c. 102, therein recited, and in part thereby repealed.

their reſpective petty ſeſſions for the diviſion or diſtrict wherein ſuch pariſh, townſhip, or place ſhall lie; which perſon or perſons ſo nominated, approved, and appointed, ſhall have the ſame powers and authorities, within ſuch pariſh, townſhip, or place, as are veſted in the perſon or perſons appointed for any diſtrict, diviſion, or place reſpectively."

Sec. 5. "Provided,—that no appointment for ſuch pariſh, townſhip, or place, ſhall be made, until the inhabitants thereof have procured, or cauſed to be procured, the proper weights, according to the ſtandard in the Exchequer, for the uſe of ſuch pariſh, townſhip, or place, to be depoſited in the cuſtody of the perſon or perſons to be appointed as laſt mentioned; and that it ſhall be lawful for the ſaid Juſtices, in their reſpective petty ſeſſions, to order and direct the coſts and charges of procuring ſuch weights, and the recompenſe and ſatisfaction to be allowed to ſuch perſon or perſons, for his or their time and trouble in the execution of ſuch office, within ſuch pariſh, townſhip, or place, to be paid out of the rate made for the relief of the poor, within ſuch pariſh, townſhip, or place."

PUBLIC GRANARIES.

Louis the XIV. uſed to declare, that he thought his time well ſpent in reading over a hundred propoſals for the advancement of the Commerce and Agriculture of France, provided one of them merited encouragement.

Holland, I ſpeak of that country anterior to the revolution, was obliged to ſubſiſt on the wants of other nations, and theſe we know are moſtly artificial. She was their factor and carrier; their induſtry or even frugality would ſtarve her; ſhe was ſenſible of this, and in order to guard againſt any ſuch event ſhe erected Public Granaries. Switzerland does not grow Corn for half her inhabitants, and even half the harveſt produced by a ſtubborn

ſoil is often deſtroyed by ſtorms, and yet we ſeldom ever hear of a ſcarcity of Corn in that country in conſequence of their Public Granaries.

At the Diet in Sweden, in 1786, the late Guſtavus the Third, convinced of the utility of Public Granaries under proper regulations, propoſed to that body, that a ſufficient number of them ſhould be erected throughout the kingdom, which was immediately acceded to. In order to carry this patriotic plan into execution, the National Bank advanced by way of loan, the ſum of fifty millions of rix dollars, (about ten millions Engliſh) at an intereſt of Three per cent. for the purpoſe of erecting and filling thoſe magazines with grain. The number of Diſtilleries throughout that extenſive country was reduced, and the granaries annexed to thoſe Diſtilleries which were aboliſhed were purchaſed and enlarged, as well as the ſtock of grain which they contained at the time. A Depôt for grain was thus eſtabliſhed in each province, with inſpectors and other officers at moderate ſalaries, who were commiſſioned to purchaſe corn in times of plenty at a reaſonable price, ſo as not to diſcourage tillage, and which was ſold out again in times of ſcarcity, at an advance proportioned to the intereſt of the original ſum borrowed; and ſuch is the propriety of the regulations, and the œconomy with which the whole is conducted, that notwithſtanding the great quantity of grain advanced to the military in the laſt war with Ruſſia, the inhabitants ſcarce felt the effect of it, and in the winters of 1798 and 1799, they might be ſaid to have *overflowed*; and it is worthy of remark that agriculture was never known to flouriſh in Sweden to ſuch an extent as it has done within the laſt ten years, ſo that this meaſure may be ſaid to operate as a bounty on huſbandry.

Independent of theſe Provincial Granaries there are Parochial ones, much on the plan of our Benefit Societies in England.

In the year 1419, Sir *Thomas Eyre*, who had filled

the Chair of Chief Magiſtrate of the City of London, built *Leadenhall*, at his own expenſe, and gave it to the City, to be uſed as a PUBLIC GRANARY,* though it has ſince been turned to very different purpoſes.

In the year 1511, the Lord Mayor, *Roger Achiley*, ſtored *Leadenhall*, the City granary, with all ſorts of grain.†

For the year 1610, the Lord Mayor and Citizens of London erected *twelve* new Public Granaries for Corn, at *Bridewell*, capacious enough to hold 6000 quarters of Corn, to be ſold to the poor at prime coſt, in caſe of a ſcarcity, or any combination of the dealers in Corn or Meal.‡

In moſt parts of Italy,§ the price of Corn is fixed yearly by municipal magiſtrates. In the territories of Venice, the *Rappreſanti* take an account of all kinds of grain immediately after the harveſt, and purchaſe a ſufficient quantity of it, to be depoſited in granaries, for the conſumption of the capital, at the price fixed for that year.

I do not mean to contend very ſtrenuouſly for either the reſtoration of the ancient mode of depoſiting Corn in granaries in England, or the practice in that reſpect, juſt ſtated, to prevail, or which lately prevailed, in Italy and other countries.

I cannot, however, omit that tribute of praiſe which is juſtly due to the wiſdom and policy of Public Granaries: when properly conducted and guided by due regulations, Public Granaries may be found, at ſome future period, not only uſeful but abſolutely neceſſary.

The beſt mode then, in my opinion, of an eſtabliſhment of Public Granaries (but of which time and ſpace will only permit me to give the outline,)

* Entick's Hiſtory and Survey, Vol. I. p. 342.
† Same Vol. p. 453.
‡ Entick, Vol. II. p. 109.
§ This was the ancient practice, and continued up to the time of troubles of the preſent war.

would be to found one or more of them in the Cities of London and Weſtminſter, ſufficient in capacity to contain Corn for the ſupply of all the inhabitants of thoſe Cities, and their adjacent or ſuburbian parts, for two whole years.

That ſuch Granaries ſhall be annually filled with Wheat, ſoon after every harveſt ſhall be gathered in, the purchaſing of it to begin in the commencement of October, and to cloſe about the end of December in every year.

That the purchaſe or building of the Granaries, and the purchaſes of Corn to be ſo made to ſtore them, ſhall be under the management, direction, and inſpection of the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen of the City of London, with granary or ſtore-houſe keepers and agents for the purchaſe of Corn, acting under them, with proper ſalaries or gratuities.

That the monies expended in the purchaſe of the Corn, the buildings to contain it, and the ſalaries or gratuities of perſons employed in the buſineſs, ſhall all be paid for by and out of a rate, to be made (under the direction of an Act of Parliament) in the nature of a county rate, on the inhabitants of the diſtrict to be benefited by the meaſure :—that ſo the grain may be diſtributed to any perſon or perſons who ſhall apply for it, being ſuch inhabitant or inhabitants, whether mealmen, bakers, or others, in any quantity or quantities required, at prime coſt.

That the diſtrict of London ſhall conſiſt of the Cities of London and Weſtminſter, the Borough of Southwark, and their environs, including a ſmall compaſs around.

With reſpect to all the other parts of the kingdom, a like Granary or Granaries ſhould be founded in each county, to be under the direction and inſpection of its Juſtices of the Peace, with officers and ſtorekeepers under them, with proper ſalaries or gratuities, for the like purpoſes as thoſe of the diſtrict of London and its environs.

The Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of

London, and the Juſtices of the Peace in each county, at their reſpective quarter-ſeſſions, to be holden in the week next after the Feaſt of St. Michael, in every year, when the harveſt is completed or got in, the time for thraſhing commenced, and a proper judgment can be formed of the crop, to affix the price for the year in their reſpective diſtricts; which, when the crop is abundant, may be as low, or even lower than 8l. but in no caſe whatever ſhould it be more than 10l. per load. They are then alſo to iſſue their directions and injunctions for the purchaſe of the Corn, at or under the prices affixed, for the uſe of their reſpective diſtricts, ſufficient for the conſumption of the inhabitants for one year at leaſt; and when the harveſt has turned out abundant, a larger quantity may be purchaſed and ſtored up, as a reſource in leſs productive ſeaſons.

In ſuch counties as have large towns corporate in them, the buſineſs of the Granaries within ſuch towns corporate, with the purchaſe and delivery of the Grain, may be veſted by the propoſed Act in the Mayor and Corporation of each town corporate, who may be directed to defray all the expences of the Granaries, ſtorekeepers, and aſſiſtants by a town-rate, independent of the reſt of the county. All the other parts of the county forming a county diſtrict, under the management of its Juſtices, in manner before ſtated.

As the propoſed diſtrict of London is only to compriſe that City, with Weſtminſter, and the Borough of Southwark, and their environs to a certain diſtance round, the buſineſs of erection and management of Granaries for the other parts of the Counties of Middleſex and Surrey, not included in that diſtrict, muſt of courſe be under the management, controul, and direction of the Juſtices of the Peace for the reſpective Counties of Middleſex and Surrey, each acting in their reſpective Counties; with like powers and authorities, and like officers under them, with

proper ſalaries or gratuities; and in like manner in all reſpects as the other counties.

This I ſubmit as the outline only of a ſcheme for the eſtabliſhment and conduct of Public Granaries, which I conceive to be preferable to any eſtabliſhment of a like nature of which I have read or heard, or conceive to be hitherto practiſed in any country.

It is, however, barely an outline, and may, if thought worthy to be put in practice, undoubtedly be improved in the filling up. It is ſufficient at preſent, if it conveys ideas of the ſcheme clear enough to be underſtood.

And, however imperfect the outline may be, the meaſure muſt be confeſſed to be at leaſt more conſtitutional—and Public Granaries to ſupply the people with Grain at prime coſt, infinitely more to be preferred in every reſpect—than a *monopolizing* Company of Mealmen and Bakers, acting for *profit* and *gain*.

A ſenſible writer, ſpeaking on this ſubject, ſays, "The preſervation of corn, when grown, both for uſe and ſale, is a matter of great conſideration, and in this regard is to be had both to quantity and quality. A prudent and wiſe adminiſtration will always take care, that ſuch a quantity ſhould be always in the nation, as will be ſufficient for the conſumption of the current year, and alſo to ſupply any accidental deficiency in the crops; and this muſt be kept either in *public magazines*, or private hands. How far the Farmers can keep may be gathered from the uſual mode of their trade, from which it may be obſerved, that the ſale in the fore part of the year, or immediately after harveſt, is more than the conſumption amongſt the inferior claſſes of Farmers; and if the exceſs is not then laid up in granaries, the ſame would in all probability be exported, and corn before the next, become ſcarce, and conſequently dear."

In order to preſerve corn from corruption, or decay, in Sweden, all that is intended to be depoſited in public magazines is dried in the ſtraw, in barns prepared for that purpoſe.

The following may not be irrelavent to this ſubject :—

Tranſlation of a Letter from the Avoyer *at* Berne, *in Switzerland, relative to the Magazines for Corn and Rice.**

" The people of *Berne* have two ſorts of Magazines, one ſubject to great variations, the other always the ſame. There are of the firſt ſort many in the capital, and many in other parts of the canton, which are filled more or leſs according as the abundance of the harveſt and goodneſs of the grain furniſh an opportunity; for, beſides the fixed revenue which the ſtate hath in fee farm rents, it hath a great quantity of tythes, which are of a very caſual and very different produce. When there are ſeveral fruitful years in *ſucceſſion*, the granaries of this ſort in the capital become full; but in other parts, if there is an appearance, towards Eaſter, of a good harveſt, the corn is ſold, which is in the caſtle of the different Bailiwicks, after having paid the ſeveral ſalaries to which they are made liable; and the bailiffs, who have a certain revenue made good to them, account for the ſurplus to the chamber of œconomy at *Berne*. The magazines of the capital, on the contrary, are never opened and ſold, but in dear times; and then care is *taken not to ſell to any family more than is ſufficient for ſupply*, and always below the market price.

BOUNTIES.

With regard to bounties,† I have not wantonly or raſhly delivered my opinion on the ſubject; what I have ſaid, is the reſult of obſervation and cool reflection.

Sir *Thomas Culpeper*, whom I have already quoted, in giving an account of the progreſs of the altera-

* See this letter with ſeveral others on the ſame ſubject, in the *Muſeum Ruſticum*. Vol. II. Number 41.

† The bounty was firſt given on the exportation of grain in 1689.

tions made in the Engliſh Corn Laws, in his celebrated Tract on that ſubject, ſays, " that our Corn trade was eſtabliſhed in paſſing through all the degrees of experience neceſſary to form, with the knowledge of the principles, a permanent plan."*

" Nevertheleſs," he ſays, page 17, " our policy is ſtill imperfect, and hath plain inconveniences, which cannot be removed as long as the *bounty* ſubſiſts."

I think it is Lord BACON who ſays, that trade ought to be dropt which is obliged to be bolſtered up by bounties. To which I ſhall only add, that *conſumption* is the beſt bounty.

CONSOLIDATION OF SMALL FARMS.

Our rage for the improvement of Agriculture is a matter that ſhould not be paſſed over in ſilence, becauſe it is an evil that may be eaſily remedied, if taken in time. Convinced of the truth of the old remark, that the real wealth of every country lies within a few inches of the ſurface; I am, on that account, a great friend to the Plough; all wiſe nations have venerated it; *Aulus Gellius* in his Twelfth Book, tells us, that the Old Romans had Public Officers to inſpect the tillage of the people, and to ſee that every one managed his farm properly, and to puniſh ſuch as did not as enemies to the Commonwealth. In our days till of late, every gentleman was a living example on his own eſtate, to the neighbourhood. There is ſomething ſo pleaſing in the purſuit of Agriculture,† that I am not ſurpriſed many

* Sir Thomas wrote this anterior to the repeal of 12th Geo. III.

† Agriculture was one of the firſt employments of mankind—it is one of the moſt innocent, and at the ſame time the moſt pleaſing of any. By its variety, it keeps the mind amuſed and in ſpirits: by its exerciſe and regularity, it conduces to give health and vigour to the body; and in the end, it is productive of every other neceſſary and convenience of life: for Agriculture is the parent of commerce, and both together form the great ſources from whence the wants of individuals are ſupplied, and the principal

gentlemen have turned their attention to it; all that I wiſh is, that they may not carry it to an extent beyond all due bounds. With reſpect to the ſize of farms, I would not have the cottage "ſpurned off the green," or that our *Lilliputian* farms, if I may uſe the expreſſion, ſhould be ſwallowed up by the natives of *Brobdinag*. There was a time that the little Farmers* in this country, reared large families on a few acres of ground, they were attached to the ſoil, they contributed to the wealth, ſtrength and proſ-

riches and ſtrength of every ſtate flow.—*Addreſs from the Agricultural Society of South Carolina.*

Mahomet Bey, king of Tunis, was dethroned by his ſubjects; but having the reputation of the philoſopher's ſtone, he was reſtored by the Dey of Algiers, upon promiſing to communicate the ſecret to him. Mahomet ſent a plough with great pomp and ceremony, intimating, that AGRICULTURE is the ſtrength of a kingdom, and that the only philoſopher's ſtone is a good crop which may be eaſily converted into GOLD.

* In a publication written ſome years ago, I met with the following claſſification of the farmers of this country. "Now the farmers may be divided into four claſſes, viz. the poor farmer, the farmer in moderate circumſtances, the farmer in good circumſtances, and the rich farmer.

"1. The poor farmers, who are very numerous, with great difficulty and labour, and ſeldom without ſome credit, as well from the Shop-keepers as their Landlord, are able to ſubſiſt themſelves and families till after the harveſt; and their crops are generally all threſhed, ſold, and gone before Chriſtmas, and by that time their lands are in order, and the ſeed put into the ground for the next year's crop.

"2. The farmers in moderate circumſtances, whoſe neceſſities, nevertheleſs, are ſuch, that, as each ſeed-time, every quarter, and fair come round, they are obliged to raiſe money to defray the expence, pay rent, or buy in live ſtock, and if they have any corn left in May they think themſelves well off.

"3. The farmers in good circumſtances, who generally have it in their power, after ſeeding their lands, paying rent, purchaſing live ſtock, and paying all other expences throughout the year, to reſerve a few loads of wheat to ſell in or after harveſt, in order to bear the expence thereof, and in expectation, if the ſeaſon ſhould prove bad, to make a better price than before harveſt.

"4. The rich farmers, who are in a capacity, as to fortune, to keep the whole, or the greateſt part of their crops the year over, ſpeculate on the markets; threſh out, and ſell when they like the price."

perity of the nation. The ruſtic virtues were found in every part of the country—they ſtill linger in the land, they are loath to leave their native abode; and if the rich landed proprietor would conſult his own intereſts, and that of the country, once more we ſhall behold the ſnug little Farm-houſe in the map of Agriculture, and the country churches filled with the ruddy congregation of both ſexes, old and young.

This evil cannot be called the growth of our own day, ſome of our countrymen in very early times began to lay *houſe to houſe and field to field*, and it had arrived to ſuch a pitch, and was attended with ſuch direful conſequences, ſo long ago as the reign of King Henry VIII. that an act was then paſſed to reſtrain it.

As the preamble or recital of this act is, in many reſpects, a pretty correct picture of the *preſent times*, it here follows at full length, together with ſhort extracts of the enacting clauſes, contained in it, by way of remedy:

Act 25 Henry VIII. c. 13,—Recites that, Foraſmuch as divers and ſundry Perſons of the King's ſubjects of this realm, to whom GOD of his goodneſs hath diſpoſed great plenty and abundance of moveable ſubſtance, now of late within few years have daily ſtudied, practiſed, and invented ways and means how they might accumulate and gather together into few hands, as well great multitude of Farms as great plenty of Cattle, and in eſpecial ſheep, putting ſuch lands as they can get to paſture, and not to tillage, whereby they have not only pulled down Churches and Towns, and enhanced the old rates of the rents of the poſſeſſions of this realm, or elſe brought it to ſuch exceſſive fines, that no poor man is able to meddle with it, but alſo have raiſed and enhanced the prices of all manner of Corn, Cattle, Wool, Pigs, Geeſe, Hens, Chickens, Eggs, and ſuch other, almoſt double above the prices which have been accuſtomed; by reaſon whereof a marvellous multi-

tude and number of the People of this realm be not able to provide Meat, Drink, and Clothes neceſſary for themſelves, their wives and children, but be ſo diſcouraged with miſery and poverty, that they fall daily to theft, robbery and other inconveniences, or pitifully die for hunger and cold; and as it is thought by the King's moſt humble and loving Subjects, that one of the greateſt occaſions that moveth and provoketh thoſe greedy and covetous people ſo to accumulate and keep in their hands ſuch great portions and parts of the Grounds and Lands of this realm from the occupying of the poor Huſbandmen, and ſo to uſe it in paſture, and not in tillage, is only the great profit that cometh of Sheep, which now be come to a few perſons hands of this realm, in reſpect of the whole number of the King's ſubjects, that ſome have four-and-twenty thouſand, ſome twenty thouſand, ſome ten thouſand, ſome ſix thouſand, ſome five thouſand, and ſome more, and ſome leſs; by the which a good Sheep for victual, that was accuſtomed to be ſold for two ſhillings and four-pence, or three ſhillings at the moſt, is now ſold for ſix ſhillings, or five ſhillings, or four ſhillings at the leaſt; and a ſtone of clothing Wool, that in ſome Shires of this realm was accuſtomed to be ſold for eighteen-pence or twenty-pence, is now ſold for four ſhillings, or three ſhillings four pence at the leaſt; and in ſome countries where it hath been ſold for two ſhillings four-pence, or two ſhillings eight-pence, or three ſhillings at the moſt, it is now ſold for five ſhillings, or four ſhillings eight-pence the leaſt, and ſo are raiſed in every part of this realm; which things, thus uſed, be principally to the high diſpleaſure of Almighty God, to the decay of the hoſpitality of this realm, to the diminiſhing of the King's people, and to the let of the Cloth-making, whereby many poor people have been accuſtomed to be ſet on work; and in concluſion, if remedy be not found, it may turn to the utter deſtruction and deſolation of this realm, which God defend."

It then enacts—For the preventing many farms being accumulated into a few hands, and for the encouragement of tillage, that no perſon ſhall have above 2,000 ſheep at one time, at ſix ſcore to the hundred, except it be upon his own inheritance only, and except what are neceſſary for his houſehold; on pain of forfeiting 3s. 4d.* for EVERY ſheep above that number, *half to the King, and half to him that will ſue.*

And if any perſon ſhall happen to have more, by reaſon of being executor, or adminiſtrator, he ſhall ſell off within a year, till he has but 2,000.

But ſheep bequeathed to a child within age, ſhall not be reckoned in the number.

And lambs are not to be reckoned ſheep, till the ſecond *Midſummer* after they are lambed.

And the Juſtices of the Peace may inquire of this offence by a Jury, or by information.

It alſo, for the ſame reaſon, enacts,—" that no perſon ſhall take above two farms with houſes thereon; nor ſhall any perſon have two, except he dwell in the pariſh where they both are, on pain of 3s. 4d.† *a week*,—half to the King, and half to him that will ſue."

If I thought that examples could influence our Politicians in favour of ſmall farms, I could adduce many; but, for the preſent, ſhall content myſelf with the following: When the preſent King of *Denmark* aſcended the throne, the attention of the youthful monarch was directed to the comforts of the peaſantry. This hardy race, particularly in *Jutland*, languiſhed in the bonds of ſlavery, their ſcanty ſubſiſtence depended on taſk-work to the rich proprie-

* At preſent ſome perſons poſſeſs great numbers of ſheep above 2,000, and, as this Act has never been repealed, it is pity it was not enforced. It would be doing a great ſervice to the public, and one-half of 3s. 4d. for each ſheep, where the number is large, is no mean penalty, and ſufficient to encourage proſecutions.

† 3s. 4d. *now* is but a ſmall ſum, yet 3s. 4d. a week for a ſeries of weeks together, would (if enforced) in ſome meaſure, operate as a cure for the evil. Though certainly the miſchief ſhould be reſtrained by ſome ſeverer law.

tors; two-thirds of *Jutland* conſiſted of barren commons. The late patriotic Count *Bernſtoff* propoſed, that theſe dreary waſtes ſhould be divided into ſmall farms, from ten to fifteen acres each, and given to the Boors;—his Daniſh Majeſty immediately acceded to the propoſal, which was inſtantly put into execution; the happy reſult of which was, that, in a few years, the whole was converted into arable and paſture land, ſo that the peaſant is now lord of that ſoil in which he formerly trod as a ſlave.* Joſeph II. did the ſame in many parts of *Hungary*, which was followed by the ſame happy effects, particularly the unhealthy marſhes of the *Battau*, which he drained at his own expence, and which is now cloathed with verdure: theſe are acts worthy the patriot and the ſtateſman—theſe are the ſources of population, the real ſtrength of every ſtate, and in which agriculture is exhibited in its native charms and beneficial effects.

PLAN *for* DIMINISHING *the* EXTENT *of* FARMS.†

General reflections have long been thrown out on the neceſſity of preventing the monopoly of farms, and of reducing their extent. I will venture to affirm, that more miſery ariſes from this ſingle ſource than from all other cauſes combined. Large farms are unfavourable to agriculture, and unfriendly to the poor; they increaſe the price of proviſions, and thus cramp manufacture; they facilitate combinations and monopolies, and break a link in that chain of gradation, which is the beauty and the boaſt of the Britiſh Conſtitution.

But their miſchievous conſequences are well known. To apply a remedy is the difficulty. I have hitherto ſeen or heard of none which would combine natural juſtice and civil liberty. What I now ſubmit to the public, will, I truſt, be found to poſſeſs both theſe eſſential requiſites.

Let Farms then of 50l. per annum, pay in the

* See Profeſſor Bugge's (a *Dane*) Travels.
† Sent to the Author.

proportion of three-pence in the pound to the poor's rate:

Farms from	50l. to 100l. per ann.	0s.	6d.	In the pound to the Poor's Rate.
	from 100l. to 150l.	0s.	9d.	
	from 150l. to 200l.	1s.	0d.	
	from 200l. to 250l.	1s.	3d.	
	from 250l. to 300l.	1s.	6d.	
	from 300l. to 350l.	1s.	9d.	
	from 350l. to 400l.	2s.	0d.	
	from 400l. to 450l.	2s.	3d.	
	from 450l. to 500l.	2s.	6d.	

*** No farm of more than 500l. per annum, to be allowed; thus, a Farm of 50l. a year will pay to each Poor's Levy, no more than 12s. 6d. while a Farm of 500l. per annum will be charged to the ſame 62l. 10s.

With reſpect, then, to the impolicy of the conſolidation of ſmall Farms, I have the beſt writers in ancient and modern times on my ſide. Columela, upwards of two thouſand years ago, aſcribed the decline, and ultimate fall of Italy to this practice—*Latifundia perdidere Italiam.*

It appears, from the remarks of a perſon who has not been inattentive to what is paſſing in his day, that, within the laſt forty years, upwards of 40,000 ſmall Farms have been conſolidated into large ones!

It has been obſerved by one of your old-faſhioned economical writers, in an Addreſs to the Dublin Society, in 1754, that if the plough was baniſhed out of all the reſt of Europe, it would meet with a ready reception in *Brabant*, which Hartlib calls the *native* country of Agriculture; and why is it ſo called, why is it found to be ſo, even in the midſt of the ravages of war? becauſe it is diſtributed into ſmall farms:—even the idea of a large one has not travelled that far;—the writings of Sir John Sinclair have not yet been tranſlated into the Flemiſh language; and, if they were, they would find but few advocates in a land that has experienced the beneficial effects of mode-

rate ſized farms:—a land where Amalthea may be ſaid to have poured all her ſtores.

Grass, Grazing-Land, Inclosures.

There is another evil of a moſt ſerious nature, attendant upon, and indeed a neceſſary conſequence of conſolidating ſmall Farms into large ones. It is this; that, as the richeſt land always pays beſt for Graſs and Grazing Farms, ſo, no ſooner is a large farm formed out of a number of ſmaller ones, than the Farmer, if the Land be ſufficiently good, begins to think of turning the whole into a Grazing Farm. The high prices of Butter, Cheeſe, and Hay, the latter of which has, of late years, been much enhanced by an increaſed number of horſes, joined to the ſmall labour and expence of conducting a Grazing Farm, compared to that of an arable one, are temptations too ſtrong to be reſiſted. And hence, the conſolidating ſmall Farms into large ones, and incloſing of common-field Land, have converted much of the beſt and richeſt arable Land in the nation into Grazing and Hay Farms; yet, the price of hay has, within theſe few years, increaſed to an enormous and an alarming degree; nor can it be otherwiſe, whilſt the breed of horſes, and their uſe, inſtead of oxen, in huſbandry, is ſo much the prevailing faſhion.

Our anceſtors uſed nothing but oxen in huſbandry buſineſs; and, two hundred years ago, few were uſed in any country in Europe, except war-horſes, and for racing and hunting. Oxen were then in general uſe for ploughing and carting, and aſſes for riding; and, ſo far as ploughing and carting in huſbandry is concerned, happy would it be if the ancient practice was reſtored; we ſhould then have plenty of beef, and more land for wheat.—An ox is valuable even when dead, and a horſe of no comparative value; an ox, when living, is maintained at a very ſmall expence, compared with the keep of a horſe; and it is a lamentable fact, that ſuch is now the prodigious

number of our horſes, that nearly half the lands in the nation are devoted to their maintenance. But to return to our ſubject of Grazing Farms and Incloſures.

Hitherto, the incloſing of Waſte Lands has not been very prevalent; but, unfortuately, it has been lately hit upon as an expedient for producing a greater quantity of grain and proviſions, though it will preſently be ſhewn that its effects muſt be directly contrary.

Gaining to the plough an immenſe quantity of Waſte Lands, which our anceſtors ſuffered to remain as commonable paſture, but which their *wiſer* deſcendants have diſcovered to be uſeleſs in that ſtate, is a meaſure ſo plauſible, that it is not ſurpriſing that an Act ſhould have paſſed in the laſt Seſſion of Parliament for ſmoothing the road to its incloſure. But let us pauſe a little, and conſider—what will be the real conſequences of incloſing it? Why, the Lord of the Manor, the 'Squire of the Pariſh, and the Parſon, will get it all into their own hands (that is, all that is worth incloſing) and add to it what they had before; conſequently, it will increaſe their farms, but by no means add to the number of ſmall ones.

Experience has proved this to have been invariably the caſe as to all the common-field incloſures; and hence we are warranted in concluding, that it will be the ſame with the commonable Waſtes whenever they ſhall be incloſed. In Leiceſterſhire, Derbyſhire, Northamptonſhire, and all the other Counties, where incloſing of Common-fields has prevailed, it has been the conſtant practice (in moſt, if not in every caſe) for the Commiſſioners, acting under the Incloſing Acts, to oblige the large Proprietors, (though compelled to allot ſome Land to the meaneſt Proprietor) to make their award ſo ſtrict with reſpect to fencing, by quick-ſet hedges, with double ditches, and timber poſts and rails on each ſide, to guard them, that any ſmall allotment was not worth the expence of the fence required.

Add to this, that very often the Commiſſioners, ſtill

farther to oblige the principal Proprietors, by whoſe intereſt they were appointed Commiſſioners, frequently contrived to place the allotments of the ſmall Proprietors at a great diſtance from their reſpective houſes and yards, or homeſtalls, as in ſome counties they call them; ſo that even if they could bear the expences of fencing, which few of them could do, they were ſtill deprived of the benefit of their allotments, by their being too far from home to be occupied to advantage. Hence, they were obliged to ſell them for any ſmall ſums they could get, to ſome opulent proprietor, (generally the Lord of the Manor, the 'Squire, or the Clergyman) whoſe large allotment laid contiguous to their reſpective ſmall ones, and who could carry a ring-fence round, and take them into his large allotment at little or no additional expence. So true is the obſervation we have before made, that, on the incloſures of the Common-fields, they were ſure to fall into the hands of the Lord of the Manor, the 'Squire, and the Parſon; or, if this is not ſtrictly the caſe, as in ſome inſtances there are more large proprietors than theſe three, we have only to add *them* to the number of thoſe, who, by their large allotments, have their property preſerved, and then it will be moſt ſtrictly true, that all the reſt of the proprietors, that is, all the ſmall ones, have invariably, by the incloſures, been compelled to ſell their allotments for little or nothing, and ſo deprived of their livings.

Were the Waſte Common Lands incloſed, there is no doubt they would ſhare the ſame fate, get into few hands, and eventually be turned into large Farms; or, rather, they would be added to the large Farms already in being, juſt as the common-field allotments were. And what is the pretence for incloſing theſe Common Waſte Lands?

It is ſaid to be for the purpoſe of bringing more Land into cultivation, and by that means increaſing the quantity of grain and proviſions; but, it has been ſhewn that, ſo far from anſwering this purpoſe,

the Waſte Lands ſo to be incloſed will only ſhare the fate of the incloſed Common-field Lands, and, like them, go in addition to the large Farms, or the formation of other large Farms, and ſuch of it as is ſufficiently good, ultimately into Grazing Farms; and, conſequently, if our foregoing obſervations are at all accurate, the incloſure of the waſtes, inſtead of *increaſing*, tends to *diminiſh the quantity* of grain and proviſions; and, inſtead of *leſſening* the prices, to *increaſe* them.

Beſides, are the various Commons and Waſte Grounds, ſome of them very good, but for the greater part conſiſting of vaſt tracts of heath and barren ſands, ſo bad that they will never pay the expence of incloſing, of no uſe, and do they turn to no account in their preſent ſtate? Yes, even the worſt of them, not excepting Bagſhot Heath itſelf, produces a great number of ſmall black-faced ſheep, the ſweeteſt mutton, and the fineſt wool, in the nation; beſides paſturing a great number of cows, pigs, and geeſe, (not to mention horſes,) belonging to perſons who live round the reſpective Waſtes, and poſſeſs ſome of them little Farms, and others only cottages with ſmall incloſures of Land, who gain a livelihood and ſupport large families by ſelling their ſweet little mutton, and their calves, pork, pigs, geeſe and other poultry; butter, and eggs.—And ſhall theſe valuable ſupplies be loſt to the public, and given up for ever, to increaſe the domains of a few individuals? Shall the induſtrious men and women, who produce them, and their innocent little ones, be deprived of their means of exiſtence, and devoted to miſery and deſpair?—Forbid it Humanity! Forbid it Heaven!—Let us reflect before it is too late,—before the fatal Incloſures are made:—and may our Law-givers, when they meet again, prevent the diſtreſſes they will produce, always remembering that—

The heart that *bleeds* at others' woes,
Shall feel each *ſelfiſh* ſorrow leſs;
The breaſt that *happineſs* beſtows
Reflected happineſs ſhall *bleſs*. CARTWRIGHT.

I would not have it underſtood, however, that I am an enemy to any ſyſtem that would tend to enlarge the boundaries of the plough; I only combat with ſordid and ſiniſter regulations of every kind. In this I am guided by experience. Thoroton* tells us, on the authority of the learned Selden, (*Janus Anglorum*) that Belinus, a Britiſh Prince who flouriſhed many centuries ago, "leſt the land ſhould become empty, or the people frequently preſſed for the want of Corn, or be diminiſhed of cattle, ſhould occupy the fields which ought to be tilled by man," decreed how many ploughs every county ſhould maintain, and appointed ſevere puniſhments for thoſe by whom the number ſhould be diminiſhed. John Rouſe, the famous Antiquary of Warwick, inveighs bitterly againſt Incloſures in his day. He enumerates the ruined villages and hamlets in that neighbourhood; ſixty-three of which were within twelve or thirteen miles of the county town. One of theſe had formerly fifty-ſeven tenants, then only ſix or ſeven. Another ſixty-three; in his time not one. A third ſeventy, of which three only remained. A fourth, nineteen tenements; then reduced to a ſingle houſe. He farther tells us, that he collected all his arguments, and preſented them under the form of Articles, to the Parliament at Coventry, in Michaelmas Term; but, alas, without effect. However, thirty years after, *i. e.* 5 Hen. VII. Incloſures were again much complained of; that they cauſed a decay of people, towns, churches, tithes, and a diminution of taxes. To remedy this, the Parliament ordered, that all houſes of huſbandry that were uſed with twenty acres of ground and upwards, ſhould be maintained and kept up for ever with the land to be uſed and occupied with them. Theſe houſes being kept

* Thoroton's Nottinghamſhire Preface.

up did of neceſſity enforce a dweller, not to be a beggar, but a man of ſubſtance, who might keep the plough going.* In the 39th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, an Act was paſſed for the maintenance of huſbandry and tillage, I ſhall preſent the Reader with an extract from the preamble:

"Whereas the ſtrength and flouriſhing eſtate of this kingdom is, and hath been greatly upheld and advanced by maintenance of plough and tillage; being the occaſion of the increaſe and multiplying of people, both for ſervice in the wars, and in times of peace; being alſo a principal mean that people are ſet on work, and thereby withdrawn from idleneſs, drunkenneſs, unlawful games, and all other lewd practices and conditions of life; and whereas by the ſame means of tillage and huſbandry, the greater part of the ſubjects are preſerved from extreme poverty, in a competent eſtate of maintenance and means to live; and the wealth of the realm is kept diſperſed, and diſtributed in many hands, where it is more ready to anſwer all neceſſary charges for the ſervice of the realm: and whereas alſo, the ſaid huſbandry and tillage is a cauſe that the realm doth more ſtand upon itſelf, without depending upon foreign countries, either for bringing in of corn in time of ſcarcity, or for want of utterance of our own commodities being in over great abundance: and whereas from the 27th of Henry the Eighth, of famous memory, until the 35th year of her Majeſty's moſt happy reign, there was always in force ſome law, which did ordain a converſion and continuance of a certain quantity and proportion of land and tillage not to be altered; and that in the laſt Parliament held in the ſaid 35th year of her Majeſty's reign, partly by reaſon of the great plenty and cheapneſs of grain at that time within the realm, and partly by reaſon of the imperfection and obſcurity, of the law made in that caſe, the ſame was diſcontinued: ſince which time there hath grown much more depopulation by turning tillage into paſture, than at

* Strype, Eccl. Mem. I. 392.

any time for the like number of years heretofore; be it enacted, &c. &c. &c."

How pathetically does Goldſmith lament the progreſs of the preſent ſyſtem of Incloſure:

"Where then, ah! where ſhall poverty reſide,
To 'ſcape the preſſure of contiguous pride?
If to ſome common's fenceleſs limits ſtray'd,
He drives his flock to pick the ſcanty blade,
Thoſe fenceleſs fields the ſons of wealth divide,
And e'en the bare-worn common is deny'd."

Carcase, Cutting Butchers, &c.

The following is an extract of a Letter ſent to me in 1795:

"It it well known for many years paſt, that a club of Carcaſe-Butchers exiſted, and ſtill exiſts, in Whitechapel, who meet twice a week to ſettle the price amongſt themſelves, at which they intend to ſell to the Cutting Butchers at the eaſt end of the town, who are obliged to purchaſe at that very price, or to go without it.—Similar combinations are no doubt held in other parts of the Metropolis. It is therefore my humble opinion, that an application ought to be made to Parliament to annihilate that peſt to ſociety—the Carcaſe-Butchers. This would ſtrike at once at the root of monopoly in this line, and would in a great meaſure prevent any artificial ſcarcity in future.

"An attempt, truly laudable, to deſtroy this neſarious knot of blood-ſuckers, was made ſome years ago:—a Bill for that purpoſe was propoſed to Parliament, but fell to the ground, it is thought, through the influence of a certain Saleſman—*Mr. W.*

"I am farther convinced, that the total abolition of Saleſmen or Brokers, and all that oppreſſive train, who ſell cattle and meat by commiſſion, would be attended on the part of the public with the moſt beneficial effects. For it is as clear as the ſun at noon-day, that each of thoſe claſſes derives a conſiderable profit on every article that is diſpoſed of.—If ſuch a mea-

ſure, I ſay, were adopted, proviſions would then paſs through fewer hands; the reſult would be, that the price would be reduced.—The Saleſman, it is well known, will always ſupport the extenſive dealer, or monopolizer, becauſe it is his intereſt; for, were it not for the Carcaſe-Butchers, they would be obliged to ſell their cattle in ſmaller lots, which would occupy a greater portion of their time. At this period, however, cattle are purchaſed for the moſt part by the Carcaſe Butchers, and ſold out in ſmall quantities to the Cutting-Butchers; ſo that, before it reaches the conſumer, it paſſes through three hands, namely, the Saleſman, the Carcaſe-Butcher, and the Cutting-Butcher. Dr. Johnſon, ſpeaking of the ſudden emergence of Government-contractors, obſerves, that "their houſes riſe like exhalations, whilſt their gilt carriages ſhoot along like meteors." —May not this, with equal juſtice, be applied to Saleſmen and Carcaſe-Butchers, who ſtart from obſcurity and indigence into opulence and pride, whilſt the Cutting Butcher remains in poverty, content as it were to feed on the very offals of thoſe to whom his wants oblige him to yield, and to whoſe luxury he daily miniſters."

In addition to the obſervations contained in the foregoing extract, it may not be improper to add, that it is now almoſt demonſtrable, that the high price which has of late, and which ſtill exiſts in the Metropolis, is in a great meaſure occaſioned by the Carcaſe-Butchers. Thoſe monopoliſts exerciſe no doubt the ſame authority over the retail butchers, which the brewers and diſtillers are known to exerciſe over the publicans. It is much to be lamented, that the Bill which was propoſed to Parliament in 1796, did not paſs into a law—as the object of it was to pluck up this evil by the root; and ſo indignant were many of the Carcaſe-Butchers at the very idea of ſuch a propoſition being brought forward, that many of them refuſed to ſell meat, except at a very advanced price, to ſuch of the retail butchers

who exerted themſelves in promoting that ſalutary meaſure.—This circumſtance of itſelf is ſufficient to ſhew the diſpoſition and power of that infernal knot. In the following Seſſions, my worthy and learned friend, Mr. Mainwaring, addreſſed the Houſe, on Monday, March 6th, 1797, on the then high price of meat; he called the attention of the Houſe to the improper management of live cattle, as the cauſe of that grievance.—He ſtated, "that in the laſt Parliament, a Petition had been preſented from the Cutting-Butchers, complaining of the hardſhips which they and the public *then* ſuffered, in conſequence of the practices of Foreſtalling, Engroſſing, and Regrating Live Cattle, which theſe butchers alledged to be the cauſes of the then preſent dearneſs of butchers' meat. That a Petition had been referred to a Committee of that Houſe; which had ſat many times, and many witneſſes had been examined;—a report was made, and ordered to be entered upon the Journals. From that report, it appeared, that there was a very numerous claſs of men called Jobbers,* who made it their buſineſs to go about into the grazing counties, and to buy up large quantities of live cattle. When they got the cattle out of the hands of the graziers, they jobbed them again, and ſold them three or four times. It was notorious, that theſe Jobbers did every thing in their power to procure the cattle from the graziers, in order to prevent them from being ſent directly to the London Market. It appeared, that enormous ſums were obtained by theſe means. One inſtance had been ſtated of a Jobber getting 2000l. *in a minute*, by buying up cattle;† and it was uſual for 2, 3, 4, and 5l. to be

* Vide the Journals of the Committee.

† When the Author was at Leiceſter Market in 1796, a Saleſman got 200l. in a ſimilar way.—Nor was the practice confined to cattle only; in the above market two well-known ſpeculators (one of whom was a Banker) bought up the major part of the cheeſe, and depoſited it in warehouſes at Leiceſter; and afterwards much of it was forwarded in waggons to London:—ſuch practices have long been carried on in moſt markets and fairs throughout England.

gotten upon each beaſt. Nor was this all; the Jobbers now not only bought up the fat, but the lean cattle! which latter they carried to the fairs in the country, and ſold them to the graziers. Another practice complained of was, *Regrating* in Smithfield Market. Regrating had *now* become a *regular trade*; —a number of perſons went into the markets early in the morning, bought up the cattle, led them to the other ſide of the market, and frequently made two, three, four, and five pounds on each beaſt in half an hour.*

" Another practice was that of *Foreſtalling*, which was carried on by the *Carcaſe-Butchers*; it was uſual for them not to buy meat in the market; they bought up half of the ſupply for the Metropolis.— The cattle ſo bought up never came to market, but

* The following decree relative to the ſale of Cattle was publiſhed by the Prefect of the Police in Paris, October 6th, 1800— *Fas eſt doceri ab hoſte.*

" The dealers are enjoined to carry their cattle directly to the market hall, and not to ſell them elſewhere on any account, under the penalty of having the cattle confiſcated, and a fine of 200 franks.

Butchers, under the ſame penalty, are prohibited from buying or giving earneſt for cattle to the dealers in any other place than openly in the market.

The dealers on their arrival at the market, ſhall declare and regiſter the number of heads of cattle they have to ſell, and range them in the ſtalls appropriated for the different kinds of cattle.

Each dealer ſhall mark his own cattle, and on no account ſuffer them to be mixed with thoſe of any other. Each ſhall remain with his ſtock, and not quit them before the ſale and delivery.

No calves ſhall be expoſed to ſale that are leſs than 40 days old, under the penalty of confiſcation, and a fine of 300 marks.

The markets to open and cloſe by the ſound of the bell, upon the ſtated hours.

Before the hour of ſale, the inſpector ſhall examine all cattle, to ſee whether they be fit for conſumption.

No cattle ſhall be ſold before the opening, or after the cloſe of the markets, under the penalty of confiſcation, and a fine of fifty marks, on each of the offenders.

The cattle not diſpoſed of ſhall be kept in the cells of the market-place, and expoſed to ſale the next day, three hours before the opening of the market."

This decree contains ſeveral inferior regulations, and is ſigned by the Prefect of the Police, *Dubois*, and by the Secretary General.

were ſent to private repoſitories. Hence the markets were *made* to *appear thin*, and a *high price* was demanded of the Cutting Butchers. One circumſtance was to be particularly lamented:—Cattle are now ſent to the markets much younger than ever they uſed to be; this ſhewed either that there was a ſcarcity, or that the breeders were poorer than formerly." What Mr. Mainwaring wiſhed to be done, was, "to cauſe an inquiry into the practices that had enhanced the price of meat. The preſent *mode of proſecution, by indictment*, created *ſo much expenſe* and *delay*, that *few* could be prevailed upon to *reſort to it*.

"He was well aware, that the Houſe would be circumſpect in laying reſtrictions on trade; and it had been frequently ſaid, that, in a commercial country like this, trade would find its own level. In moſt caſes this was true; but, in *reſpect to the neceſſaries of life, Government ought always to take care*, that the *price of proviſions* ſhould be as low as poſſible.* The Committee having inveſtigated the ſubject fully, and examined a number of witneſſes, had reſolved, that the practices of the Carcaſe-Butchers, in monopolizing the markets, and of the Jobbers, who bought up, ſpeculated in, and *ſold cattle at advanced prices*, were the principal *cauſes of the dearneſs of* butchers' meat."

Upon which *the Speaker* ſuggeſted, that it would be neceſſary that the report on the reſolutions of the Committee ſhould be read. *The reſolutions were accordingly read.*

Mr. Mainwaring then moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the more effectually preventing Engroſſing, Foreſtalling, and Regrating of live cattle.

Mr. Alderman Combe ſeconded the motion.

* Mr. Mainwaring's obſervations were juſt, becauſe the ſale of our manufactures chiefly depends on the competition upon which they are put with thoſe of other countries. This circumſtance alone ſhould induce Government to watch the cauſes of the preſent alarming riſe in the various articles of proviſions.

The motion was agreed to, and the laſt two mentioned gentlemen were ordered to prepare and bring in the bill; but it was afterwards thrown out.*

As it is confeſſed, on all hands, that nothing leſs than the ſtrong arm of the Legiſlature can eradicate this evil,—which may be compared to a certain tree in India, whoſe very branches take root, and whoſe baleful dews poiſon every thing on which they fall.—It would be a grateful taſk, and, we truſt, that the bill will be revived, and that it will be hailed by the people of England, as an earneſt proof of the humanity, wiſdom, and power of the Britiſh Senate.

The following documents may ſhed ſome additional light on this intereſting ſubject.

Number of Cattle ſold in certain periods in Smithfield, in 1794 *and* 1795.

It appears, by a comparative ſtatement taken from the City Tolls for the firſt twenty-four weeks in 1794 and 1795, that there was an increaſe in the number of beaſts in the latter year of *ſix thouſand!!*† Notwithſtanding the practice of Foreſtalling the cattle on the road, and Regrating in the market, have been reduced to a ſyſtem, and acted upon in a manner that calls aloud for redreſs.

It has been aſcertained by evidence before the Committee of the City of London, for inquiring into the cauſes of the dearneſs of proviſions, that, in the months of March and April, (1800,) during which the price of meat roſe ſo rapidly, near one thouſand head of cattle were brought to market, beyond the number brought in the ſame months in the year 1799. It alſo appeared, that the purchaſes

* A ſimilar bill met with the ſame fate in 1786, owing to the miſguided zeal of Mr. Burke, who ſtrenuouſly oppoſed it.

† This was not denied by the Saleſmen and Carcaſe-butchers; and it was ſaid by *many* of them that this *increaſe* could not be of *much ſervice* to the public.

made by Mr. MELLISH, the government contractor, the laſt year, did not materially exceed thoſe of former years. — His *contracts* have been found, however, *at all times*, to govern the *prices* of the market.*

Prices of the Products of Fleſh Meat, Pork, Butter, and Cheeſe, paid by the Victualling Office in the following years:

Years.	Fleſh Meat. Cwt.		lb.	Pork. Cwt.	
	s.	*d.*		*s.*	*d.*
1767	25	5		52	6
1772	26	3		49	11
1773	24	0		42	1911
1776	28	7			
1786	28	6		51	3
1795†	33	11	$3\frac{1}{2}\frac{60}{112}$		
one time at 37s.			4 nearly.		

	Butter. Cwt.		Cheeſe. Cwt.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
1786	46	$5\frac{1}{4}$	37	10
1795	71	3	46	3
	to		46 to	6
	75 &	76		

It has been thought, by many perſons, that the Carcaſe-Butchers at London make a very unfair

* As we have already ſtated, that the buſineſs of Smithfield Market is ſuſpended till Mr. MELLISH makes his appearance, we think it might not be an unfair queſtion to aſk the above Gentleman, by what poſſible contrivances he can afford to pay for meat more than double the ſum for which he has contracted to furniſh the Victualling Office?

† Mr. MELLISH, the government contractor, ſupplied the Victualling Office with beaſts, at the above price of 33s. 11d. per cwt. which is rather more than 3½d. per lb. within the firſt three months of this year.

profit, if it is conſidered, that, during the year 1795, the price of Meat to the conſumer was nearly, if not quite, double what is here noted: it will furniſh abundant matter for reflection to thoſe who are diſpoſed to draw inferences from data of this nature.

To the Honourable the COMMONS *of* GREAT BRITAIN *in Parliament aſſembled.*

The humble Petition of the Cutting, Retail Butchers of LONDON, WESTMINSTER, &c. (In 1795.)

SHEWETH,

THAT, a very heavy and great diſtreſs hath for a long time affected, and doth ſtill continue to affect your Petitioners, and alſo the public in general, eſpecially the middling and lower orders thereof, by the yearly riſe of the neceſſaries of life, (among which butchers' meat is one of the moſt conſiderable,) occaſioned, ſo far as relates to this ſpecific article, (they humbly conceive,) not only by the practices of monopolizing Jobbers, Foreſtallers, Regraters, and Engroſſers, but alſo by that dealing which hath of late ſo much prevailed of Carcaſe Butchering, within the diſtricts of the trade of your Petitioners; and, as the ſaid deſcription of men ſuppoſe, that the ſtatute paſſed in the twelfth year of his preſent Majeſty's reign, intituled, "*An Act for repealing the Laws againſt Badgers, Foreſtallers*, &c." doth extend, not only to the ſtatutes particularly named therein, but alſo to the eleventh clauſe of the 31ſt Geo. II. c. 40, and to every other prohibitory ſtatute whatever, they deem themſelves unreſtrainable as to the practices and dealings they have uniformly exerciſed and perſiſted in ſince the paſſing the ſaid repealing Act; in conſequence of which, (by the influence they have acquired over the ſaleſmen,) they ſo obſtruct and prevent your Petitioners from the advantages of an open and fair market of

live cattle, that they are compelled, in too many inſtances, to have recourſe to the ſaid Jobbers, Carcaſe Butchers, &c. for a ſupply of thoſe goods they formerly had the opportunity of buying alive, and at firſt hand; by which ſeveral conſiderable profits are unneceſſarily made by theſe middle men, to the certain progreſſive enhancement of the price of meat, and to the manifeſt injury of the public, and of your Petitioners, as a trading body.

Your Petitioners alſo humbly repreſent, That this evil hath of late extended to ſo alarming and grievous a height, that it hath raiſed the price of meat in moſt caſes, to more than double the price at which it was ſold in the years 1765, 1766, 1767, and 1772.

Your Petitioners further repreſent, That, during ſeveral weeks of the laſt ſpring, they were under the neceſſity of ſelling meat to many of the lower claſs of the people at a leſs price than it coſt them, in order to allay the diſcontents and murmurs ſo prevalent among them at that time; and, that notwithſtanding this was well known at that period, they had the mortification of experiencing, that the Jobbers, Foreſtallers, Carcaſe Butchers, &c. continued in the unfeeling and ſordid practice of enriching themſelves through the medium of your Petitioners, notwithſtanding their calamitous ſituation.

Your Petitioners further repreſent, That theſe men not only engroſs to themſelves the greateſt and beſt part of the live ſtock brought into Smithfield market, as before ſtated, but alſo that which is brought weekly into the ſmall markets from two to fifteen miles from the metropolis; and that this ſyſtem of Foreſtalling, &c. is another real cauſe of the progreſſive riſe in the price of meat; and alſo that it tends to concentrate a great and valuable part of the trade into the hands of theſe middle men, to the excluſion, as well as to the manifeſt injury of the fair traders, who were the original purveyors and venders of this article of ſuſtenance to the public.

The preſent, as well as the future evil conſequences attending this practice, they hope this Honourable Houſe will protect their humble Petitioners from.

Your Petitioners beg leave finally to obſerve, That, it having been ſuggeſted, the dry ſummer of 1794, and the winter which ſucceeded thereto, might in a great degree have contributed to the exceſſive high price of meat, and that a more kind and productive ſeaſon would not only leſſen, but in ſome meaſure do away ſo much of the cauſe as doth ariſe from theſe ſources, they entertained the fulleſt expectation that the mild and genial time which hath ſucceeded, and which ſtill continues, would have effected ſo deſirable and beneficial a change. But, alas! the face of things is not altered; the hand of Avarice yet graſps the obvious good GOD means to all; and thus that hope which ſupported the expectation of your Petitioners, is rendered abortive, and no longer a conſolation to them; for though the markets have, (for many months paſt,) been ſuperabundantly ſupplied with ſtock in the beſt condition, no perceptible change for the better hath been the conſequence; the price of this article of ſuſtenance is now as high as ever remembered, and your Petitioners humbly conceive, will progreſſively riſe, unleſs timely prevented by the wiſdom of this Honourable Houſe. From information of undoubted veracity, they learn, that, during the time complained of, meat hath in common been ſold, and in many places continues ſo to be, at the rate of one half-penny to three half-pence a pound cheaper, at the ſmall diſtance of twenty or thirty miles only from London, than *in that Metropolis and its environs.*

Your Petitioners, thus ſurrounded by the ſordid arts of Monopolizers, &c. on the one hand, and of approaching ruin, (to many, if not averted,) on the other; of all which, as well as of every other alligation in this Petition, they are prepared to give the moſt ſatisfactory evidence; humbly pray, that their

grievous condition may induce this moſt Honourable Houſe to take the ſame into their conſideration, and that ſuch effectual and ſpeedy relief may be granted them, as the urgency of their caſe, and the wiſdom of the Houſe may entitle them to.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever unfeignedly pray, &c.

In the year 1795, a very odd circumſtance occurred,—two fine beaſts were bought by a butcher; but it turned out, he was only the nominal buyer: for in fact they were the property of a ſaleſman—the beaſts were ſent out of the market without *cutting their tails*, a proof that ſuch unmarked cattle are intended to be brought *again* into the market. For it ſo happened theſe beaſts were ſtolen from Poplar marſhes,* and upon their being ſtopped, and the perſon taken into cuſtody, upon which a diſpute aroſe: the queſtion was, who was the owner? The butcher claimed them, and ſo did the ſaleſman. This diſpute cauſed the matter to be known. The butcher perſiſted in detaining the beaſts, for which the *honeſt* ſaleſman brought an action; the butcher commenced a proſecution againſt the ſaleſman for *Regrating*.

One principal cauſe aſſigned for the dearneſs of butchers' meat is, the luxury of the times: this is a melancholy fact, as there is little hopes of bringing back our tables to the ſimple and frugal days of our anceſtors.—The conſumption of fiſh, fowl, fleſh, &c. is amazingly encreaſed ſince the year 1742. About that time the butchers' bill was about double the baker's, or at the utmoſt treble, which has encreaſed in a great proportion ever ſince.

The *mania* of what is called improving the breed

* The Marſhes, and other grounds near London, are held by a few Carcaſe Butchers; and to theſe grounds the cattle, ſheep, &c. purchaſed at Smithfield, are brought, and are too frequently ſent back again to the ſame market; and indeed they are often ſold on one ſide of Smithfield and *re-ſold* on the other.

of cattle is truly laughable: would that it extended no farther! but the evil is a ſerious one—Fat Bullocks, fat Sheep, &c. is all the *rage*.—This has been very happily ridiculed in an Eſſay publiſhed in the *St. James's Chronicle*, Saturday, September 27, 1800, under the ſignature of "A Friend to real Improvement." The following is a tranſcript of the P. S. "I have now before me an article in a news-paper, ſtating, that at an Agricultural Meeting in Yorkſhire a man received the reward of *two guineas* for bringing up *twelve* children without pariſh aſſiſtance! There is *liberality!—two guineas* for *twelve Children!* — What would he have had for *twelve Sheep* ſo *fat* that nobody could eat them?"

I have been told, the principal Cheeſemongers in London have formed themſelves into a body; they are owners of many ſhips, which are employed between London, Liverpool, and Cheſter; theſe ſhips are chiefly engaged in bringing up Cheeſe to London; their wealthy owners having factors in Cheſhire, &c. who buy up the Cheeſe for them,* and lodge it in their warehouſes in Cheſter, &c.—At their weekly meetings they ſettle what quantity each ſhall have brought up to market—by this means they feed the market in ſuch a manner that they can command whatever price they pleaſe: and I believe it to be true, that if any perſon offers to have Cheeſe brought by any other veſſels, which are called *bye*-veſſels, they intimidate them by threatening never to bring any more for them. They endeavoured ſome years ſince to monopolize the whole ſhipping trade to thoſe places; and (if I am not miſinformed) they have now in part accompliſhed it, by carrying goods at lower prices than others can afford to do, indemnifying themſelves by an extra charge on the freight of Cheeſe, which they have totally ingroſſed. Should the Freighters, for the ſake of a little gain, ſuffer them completely to effect their purpoſe, they will

* This, to my certain knowledge, was the caſe at Leiceſter Fair in 1795 and 1796.

be able in future (if they do not already) to make them pay what freight they pleaſe: and thus it appears they make an artificial ſcarcity of Cheeſe, and have done ſo for many years. It has been already proved, I think, that butchers' meat and fiſh are faſt approximating to a ſimilar ſtate.

COALS.

As fuel enters into all the neceſſaries of life, and may be ſaid in a degree to ſupply many of them, eſpecially in a ſevere ſeaſon, according to the old Monkiſh Poet:

Ignis dimidium eſt brumali tempore vitæ.—

I have laid down ſuch acts in my larger Work as were paſſed at different periods for the better regulation of the ſale, &c. of that "guiltleſs ore," as *Cleveland* calls it, and which in point of uſe may well be preferred to the mines of Golconda. The veſſels employed in the Coal Trade amount, at the moment I am writing, to 71,903 tons. Surely ſuch an extenſive branch of trade demands the moſt ſerious conſideration of the Legiſlature, and I am glad to find that it was thought ſo by the Houſe of Commons in the courſe of the laſt Seſſions; and it is to be hoped, that the valuable labours of the committee, on whom that important taſk devolved, will be taken into conſideration by the Houſe in the approaching Seſſions, and that ſuch regulations will be adopted and paſſed into a law, as will afford thoſe that are neceſſarily concerned in the trade a reaſonable profit, and bring the conſumption within the reach of the labouring mechanic, and the induſtrious poor.

An Act for regulating the Meaſures and Prices of Coals.

By the 16th and 17th of Charles the II. c. 2. § 1. it is enacted, "That from and after the 6th day of *March*, in the year of our Lord 1664, all ſorts of Coal, commonly called Sea Coals, brought into the river of *Thames*, and ſold, ſhall be ſold by the

chaldron, containing thirty-ſix buſhels heaped up, and according to the buſhel ſealed for that purpoſe at *Guildhall*, in *London*, and ſo for a greater or leſſer quantity; and that all other ſorts of Coals coming from *Scotland* and other places, commonly ſold by weight and not by meaſure, ſhall be ſold by weight, after the proportion of 112 pounds to the 100 avoirdupois weight, without any fallacy or deceit; upon pain of forfeiture of all the Coals which ſhall be otherwiſe ſold or expoſed to ſale by any woodmonger or retailer of Coals, and the double value thereof, to be recovered by any perſon or perſons that will proſecute for the ſame, in any court of record, or by way of complaint made unto the Lord-Mayor of *London* for the time being, and Juſtices of the Peace within the city of *London* and liberties thereof, or to any two of them, or to the Juſtices of Peace of the ſeveral and reſpective counties and places where ſuch Coals ſhall be expoſed to ſale, or any of them; who are hereby impowered and required to call the parties before them, and to hear and examine ſuch complaint upon oath, which by virtue of this act is to be adminiſtered by them, or any two of them; and upon due proof thereof made to their ſatisfaction, to convict the offenders, and to give warrant under their hands and ſeals for levying the forfeitures accordingly; the one half thereof to be to and for the uſe of the perſon or perſons ſo proſecuting or complaining, and the other half to and for the uſe of the poor, or repairing of the highways within the ſame pariſh, or any other adjoining pariſh or pariſhes, to be appointed and apportioned by the direction of the ſaid Lord Mayor and Juſtices, by ſuch their warrant as aforeſaid; and the ſaid Lord Mayor of *London* and the Court of Aldermen for the time being, and the Juſtices of the Peace of the ſeveral counties reſpectively, or any three or more of them, whereof one to be of the *Quorum*, are hereby impowered to ſet the rates and prices of all ſuch Coals as ſhall be ſold by retail, as they from time to time ſhall judge reaſon-

able, allowing a competent profit to the ſaid retailer beyond the price paid by him to the importer, and the ordinary charges thereupon accruing."

§ 2. "And that if any ingroſſer or retailer of ſuch Coals ſhall refuſe to ſell as aforeſaid, that then the ſaid Lord Mayor and Aldermen, and Juſtices of the Peace reſpectively, are hereby authorized to appoint and impower ſuch officer or officers or other perſons, as they ſhall think fit, to enter into any wharf or other place where ſuch Coals are ſtored up, and in caſe of refuſal, taking a conſtable to force entrance, and the ſaid Coals to ſell, or cauſe to be ſold, at ſuch rates as the ſaid Lord Mayor and Aldermen, and Juſtices reſpectively ſhall judge reaſonable, rendering to ſuch ingroſſer or retailer the money for which the ſaid Coals ſhall be ſo ſold, neceſſary charges being deducted."

Made perpetual by 7 and 8 William III. cap. 36.

By 17 Geo. III. c. 35. § 1. "Three Juſtices (1 Q.) may ſet the prices of Coals called Sea-Coals, brought by ſea into any river, creek, or port, and ſold by retail, after landing in any place to which the 16th and 17th Cha. II. reſpecting the prices of Coals brought into the river *Thames*, doth not extend, as they ſhall judge reaſonable, allowing a competent profit to the retailer, beyond the price paid by him to the importer, and the ordinary charges; and if any ingroſſer or retailer of ſuch Coals ſhall refuſe to ſell as aforeſaid, then the ſaid Juſtices ſhall appoint ſuch perſons as they ſhall think fit to enter into any place where ſuch Coals are ſtored up, and in caſe of refuſal, taking a conſtable to force entrance, and the ſaid Coals to ſell at ſuch rates, rendering to the owner the money for which they were ſold, neceſſary charges being deducted. And if any action be brought againſt the Juſtice, Conſtable, or other perſon for any thing done in purſuance of this act, he may plead the general iſſue; and if the verdict be found for him, he ſhall recover damages and treble coſts."

By the 26th Geo. III. c. 14, § 2, The Coal-Me-

ters are ſubjected to the juriſdiction of the Quarter Seſſions for *Surrey*.

Dimensions of Sacks for carrying Coals.

By 26 Geo. III. c. 83, § 6, it is enacted, "That, from and after the 24th day of *July*, 1786, no Sacks to be made uſe of for the carriage of Coals within the limits of this Act, which ſhall not be full four feet four inches in length, and full twenty-ſix inches in breadth, after they are made ſhall be ſealed or marked at any Office, or Officers, or by any Officer or Officers appointed, or to be appointed for the purpoſe of ſealing and marking ſuch Sacks, by any Law now in being reſpecting the ſame."

By § 7, it is enacted, "That if any Wharfinger or Carrier of Coals ſhall at any time or times hereafter, during the continuance of this Act, make uſe of any Sack or Sacks for the carrying of Coals, within the limits of this Act, of leſs dimenſions than four feet in length and two feet in breadth; or ſhall wilfully make, or procure to be made or uſed, any falſe buſhel or other meaſure, and be convicted thereof by the Oaths, (or, being of the people called *Quakers*, by affirmation) of two or more credible witneſſes, before one or more of his Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace for the City of *London*, or the County of *Middleſex*, he ſhall, for every ſuch offence, forfeit and pay the ſum of *Five Pounds*."

By the 26th Geo. III. c. 108. § 2, it is enacted, "That, in all caſes where any Juſtice or Juſtices of the Peace is or are by this Act, authoriſed to examine any Perſon or Perſon on Oath or Affirmation, it ſhall be lawful for ſuch Juſtices reſpectively to adminiſter ſuch Oath, and take ſuch Affirmation."

The Committee of the Houſe of Commons, in 1800, impute the riſe of the price of coals to the following general cauſes:

1ſt, The agreement amongſt the coal-owners in the North, called "The limitations of Vends," by which each colliery on the Tyne is limited, ſo as not to ex-

ceed a certain quantity in each year. Thoſe coal-owners who are found to have ſhipped more coal than their ſtipulated quantities, being bound to make a certain allowance at the end of each year to thoſe who have ſhipped leſs, and to conform to certain other regulations adopted by the coal-owners on the River Wear.—2d. The detention of the ſhips at Newcaſtle, waiting for the beſt coals, ſometimes a month or ſix weeks.—3d. The want of a market in London which would admit of a competition, perfectly free, in the purchaſe of Coals.—4th. The circumſtances of the Coal-Buyer being, in many inſtances, owner both of ſhip and cargo, which (as appears in evidence) leads to conſiderable abuſe.—5th. The want of a ſufficient number of meters, and of craft for unlading the ſhips on their arrival in the river, and the occaſional delays in procuring ballaſt on their return voyage.—6th. The practice of mixing the beſt Coals with thoſe of an inferior quality, and ſelling the whole ſo mixed as of the beſt kind. —And 7th. To frauds in the meaſurement, carriage, and delivery of Coals.

Inland Collieries.

To ſhew the practicability of procuring a ſupply of inland Coals for the Metropolis, we extract the following paſſages from the evidence of Mr. Raby, iron maſter :

Provided Parliament were diſpoſed to take off the reſtriction which now prevails on bringing Coals within a certain diſtance of London, by inland navigation ?—The preſent price is 6s. per ton for the beſt Staffordſhire Coal of 21 cwt. of 120 lb. to the cwt. inferior Coals are ſold at 3s. per ton, and from that upwards in proportion to their quality; the ſmall Coal for working engines is ſold from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per ton; the ſupply produced for the manufactures of the country would always be ſufficient, without increaſing the preſent price, as there are many new Collieries now opening, which would be able to ſupply

any given quantity required for the London Market; provided the coals were permitted to be brought by the inland navigations. I conſider the diſtance, upon the average, from the above Collieries to Brentford 148 miles; the value of the mere boatage, I think three farthings per ton per mile would amply pay; namely, 9s. 3d. to Brentford for the boatman, boy, and horſe, their riſk of back carriage included; the tonnage I think ſhould be one halfpenny per ton per mile, which would amount to 6s. 2d. more, in all 21s. 5d. per ton. A London chaldron of Newcaſtle Coals weighs on an average 28 cwt.; therefore add one-third of this weight, and one-third of the price on a London chaldron of Staffordſhire Coal at Brentford, and it would coſt 28s. 7d. and allowing 2s. 11d. profit upon the chaldron, and for lighterage to London 1s. 6d. more, it would amount to 33s. It is my opinion, that if the tonnage before referred to was reduced to one halfpenny per ton per mile, the Staffordſhire Coal might be delivered in London at that price per chaldron, ſuppoſing no duty to be paid.

Thoſe Coals upon the ſpot are applied to all the manufactories of thoſe parts. I do not conſider them of ſo ſtrong a quality as the Newcaſtle, but a very fierce burning Coal.

Will a chaldron of Staffordſhire Coal go as far as a chaldron of Newcaſtle Coal for general uſe? I do not think it would.

Inform the Committee of the ſtate of the Swanſea Collieries, and their trade in Coals?—Upon the Swanſea river there are many veins of Coals, which run in general from three to ſix feet thick, worked on each ſide of the river, and there is lately a canal opened into the hills, by which many more Coals are likely to be brought down. The Coal Trade of that town was laſt year upwards of 3000 ſail of veſſels, beſides which there is a conſumption in the copper trade upon the ſpot, from 1500 to 2000 tons per week: there is likewiſe up that river a very great abundance of what is called Stone Coal, uſed prin-

cipally by Maltſters, which by means of the preſent canal, will be brought to market, and great abundance of culm, for the lime trade.

Can any additional ſupply from Swanſea be procured for the London Market, and in what manner? The length of the voyage to London, compared with that from Newcaſtle, is ſuch as to render it impracticable, both paying the ſame duty. I uſed to draw, in peace, a great part of my ſupply, which is very large, from Swanſea, and which was, by obtaining freight as ballaſt by ſhips from Briſtol wanting to come to London, by which means I only paid 10s. per chaldron freight, which, at the preſent rate of freight, would coſt me near 50s.

At what rate could Coals be ſhipped on board at Swanſea? Put free on board at 6s. 8d. per ton, or 10s. per London chaldron, each chaldron weighing 30 cwt. of 112lb. to the cwt. the Swanſea Coals weighing more than the Newcaſtle Coals.

By what reduction of duties do you think the Swanſea Coals could be brought in competition with the Newcaſtle? No reduction of duty in time of war would avail, owing to the high freight and great length of voyage; but, in time of peace, if half the duty was taken off, I conceive they would come in competition with the Newcaſtle.

What would be the expenſe of freight from Swanſea to London in time of peace? I cannot judge what it would be; but the freight I did pay for a few veſſels laſt peace was 15s. per chaldron; and the price of inſurance was one guinea per cent.

Do you think any meaſure likely to be ſo effectual to keep down the price of Newcaſtle Coals, and to aſſure a regular ſupply of Coals at a reaſonable price, (eſpecially in time of war) in the London Market, as a competition with the Inland Collieries? I conſider it as the only poſſible means, as the great difference at preſent ariſes from the high price of freight and inſurance, and I conſider great good would ariſe from there being no immediate connection between the

Newcaſtle and Staffordſhire Collieries; and likewiſe, that it is an abſolute certain mode of a regular ſupply at all times, except in times of froſt.

Suppoſing Newcaſtle and Swanſea Coals both in the Market together, would you make any difference in the price you would offer for them for the uſes of your manufactory? If I could have a regular ſupply of the Swanſea coal, I would as ſoon have the one as the other.

Necessaries of Life in Ancient Times.

If in our time any propoſition is made for regulating the prices of corn, or other neceſſary articles of life, and keeping them within due bounds, by the authority of Government; or even to aſcertain the quantity of grain in the country, we are anſwered, that any ſuch meaſure would trench on the rights of individual property.

I was not in the Houſe of Commons to hear what paſſed, in March laſt, on the ſubject of aſcertaining the quantity of grain in the kingdom; but the Newſpapers all agree in reporting that *Mr. Pitt* ſpoke to the following effect:

"That he believed if a receipt was wanting for the dearth, and to ſecure its returning again and again, with increaſed danger, it would be for the Legiſlature to violate the rights of property, by an inquiſition into the poſſeſſions of private men. Such an inquiſition would be contrary to every principle of juſtice. And he *would* ſay, that the corn merchant, cornfactor, and all other dealers in *that* article, had *a right* to have *as much* of it in their poſſeſſion *as they pleaſed*; and alſo the right of diſpoſing of it *as they pleaſed*. Such ſecurity to that kind of property was the foundation of all *Agricultural Improvements** and proſperity."

* The nature and effect of our modern large-farm *Agricultural Improvements*, compared with the old methods and ſmall farms, we have ſtated in the preceding pages.

Neither was I in the Houſe of Lords on the 20th of March laſt, on the third reading of the bill for prohibiting the manufacture of ſtarch from wheat; but the Newſpapers report, that *Lord Grenville* took occaſion to obſerve:—"That he contiuued to be of opinion, that no good could poſſibly ariſe by diſcuſſion;—and that the beſt way would be to leave the grain to find its own value. The farmer, as well as a man in any other trade, had an undoubted right to make as much as he could by his articles, otherwiſe, who would *enter his property** in ſuch concerns?"

Such doctrines as theſe, coming from perſons ſo high in office as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and one of His Majeſty's Principal Secretaries of State, produced the effect which might naturally be expected. The large farmers and monopolizing dealers in grain, began immediately to quote in their converſations, the opinions of the Prime Miniſter and Secretary of State in their favour; and, ſupported by ſuch high and powerful advocates, ſeemed to fancy they might *ſin* with impunity.

So fancying, and no doubt thinking, the great and high-officed Politicians, who were ſo friendly to them, were *much wiſer* than King Solomon, who ſays, "He that withholdeth corn, the people ſhall *curſe* him; but *bleſſing* ſhall be upon the head of him that *ſelleth it*;"† they withheld their grain from market with additional tenacity, till the importation of corn, and the proſpect of an abundant harveſt operated in the manner deſcribed in the Second Chapter, and cauſed the farmers to fill the markets with their long-hoarded ſtores of wheat, which they had withheld for one, two, and, in ſome inſtances, even for three years.

This undeniable proof of a long-hoarded abun-

* *Enter his property*, indeed! Happy would it be if rich men were not ſo fond of *entering their property* in farming. We might, in that caſe, again experience the bleſſings of *ſmall-farm agriculture*.

† Proverbs, ch. xi. v. 26.

dance had the effect of leſſening, in ſome meaſure, the prices of wheat, and relieved us, in ſome degree, from the evils of an artificial famine, ſo far as related to that commodity; and the proſecutions and legal deciſions, which have recently taken place, have happily had the effect of checking the career of offenders againſt the laws reſpecting various other neceſſary articles of life.

There is however, perhaps, nothing that could anſwer the purpoſe ſo well as fixing the *higheſt* price for ſale of each neceſſary article of ſubſiſtence; in London, and other large corporate towns, by the Mayor and Aldermen, and in each country by its Juſtices of the Peace, and which ſuch magiſtrates of corporations and counties ſhould be authoriſed and obliged by Act of Parliament to do at each of their Quarter Seſſions; taking into their conſideration the prices of labour, in their reſpective diſtricts, and fixing the prices of the ſeveral neceſſary articles agreeable thereto, ſo as to put them within the reach of the working people. And the act ſhould provide ſevere and effectual penalties, and puniſhments, on ſuch dealers as ſhould aſk higher prices than fixed by the Magiſtrates of the diſtrict.

What! ſay the farmers, monopoliſts, and the combined monied dealers, and their tender-hearted friends, who can bear the idea of fixing the prices of any thing but the neceſſaries of life,—would you deſtroy our liberties? Would you introduce amongſt us the new-fangled meaſure of a French *maximum*, adopted by that nation in the moſt violent days of Jacobiniſm?—Fair and ſoftly, Gentlemen,—let us aſk *you* a queſtion.—

Pray which might be thought the greateſt infringement of Britiſh Liberty, to fix the higheſt price of neceſſaries, and keep them within the reach of our labourers, or to indict and puniſh ſuch labourers for combination, if they hold meetings for the purpoſe of advancing the prices of their labour, ſo as to bear ſome proportion to the *exorbitant rates* to which the

combinations and illegal practices of rich farmers and dealers, have advanced every article of life?

To reſtrain men from meeting together to conſult and purſue meaſures for raiſing the prices of their labour, though without ſuch riſe they cannot exiſt and ſupport their families, is admitted to be law. But a man's labour is ſurely as much his own property as a monopolizer's goods; and is the monopolizer or the labourer the greateſt friend to the community?

Why not then rather indict and puniſh the rich offenders, who by combinations raiſe and keep up the neceſſaries of life? And why were not the brewers indicted, when, by combining and entering into mutual reſolutions, they lately raiſed the price of Porter?

Neither is the fixing the maximum a new-fangled meaſure, nor of French invention; on the contrary, the fixing the higheſt price of each neceſſary article of life is very ancient, and was long ago in uſe in our own country, as will appear from the following quotations:—

In the reign of Edward II. in the year 1314, the Parliament ſettled the prices of proviſions to be ſold in *London* at the following rates, under the penalty of forfeiting the goods, as appears by the *King's* Letter to the Sheriffs of London:—*

	£.	s.	d.
The beſt graſs fed ox, alive, at	0	16	0
The beſt grain fed ox, at	1	4	0
The beſt cow, at	0	12	0
The beſt hog of two years old, at	0	3	4
The beſt ſhorn mutton, at	0	1	4
The beſt gooſe, at	0	0	3
The beſt capon, at	0	0	2½
The beſt hen, at	0	0	1½
The beſt chickens, two for	0	0	1½
The beſt young pigeons, three for	0	0	1
Twenty eggs, at	0	0	1

* Entick's Hiſtory and Survey of London, Weſtminſter, and Southwark, vol. i. p. 207.

In the reign of Edward III. in the year 1335, the King, with the advice of his Privy Council, ſent a ſevere reprimand to the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of the city of London, upbraiding them for the little regard they paid to their oaths, by ſuffering bread, wine, beer, and other kind of victuals, to be ſold in the city at exceſſive rates; and permitting bad weights and meaſures: and commanded the Lord Mayor, upon the penalty of his whole fortune, forthwith to convene the Aldermen and Commonalty of the city, to deliberate upon, and to *regulate the prices of all ſorts of proviſions*, according to the prime coſt: and he ſtrictly enjoined the Mayor and Sheriffs to reform the abuſes reſpecting weights and meaſures.

In purſuance of this royal command, the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commonalty, ſo regulated the price of proviſions, that they, in the year 1335,* ſettled,

	£.	*s.*	*d.*
The beſt wheat, the quarter, at	0	2	0
The beſt ox, at	0	6	8
The beſt ſheep, at	0	0	8
The beſt pigeons, ſix for	0	0	1
The beſt gooſe, at	0	0	2
The beſt pig, at	0	0	1

In the reign of King Edward VI. it was ordered by the King and Council,† that

FROM MIDSUMMER TO MICHAELMAS,

The beſt fat ox ſhould be ſold at	2	5	0
Beſt ſteers and runts, at	1	5	0
Beſt heifers and kine, at	1	2	0

FROM HOLLOWMAS TO CHRISTMAS,

The beſt fat ox to be ſold at	2	6	8
Beſt ſteers and runts, at	1	6	3
Beſt heifers and kine, at	1	3	0

* Entick, vol. i. p. 242 and 243.
† Entick, vol. ii. p. 8 and 9.

	£.	s.	d.
FROM CHRISTMAS TO SHROVETIDE,			
The beſt fat ox to be ſold at	2	8	4
Beſt ſteers and runts, at	1	8	4
FROM SHEERING TIME TO MICHAELMAS,			
The beſt fat wether to be ſold at	0	4	4
If ſhorn, at	0	3	0
Beſt fat ewe, at	0	2	6
If ſhorn, at	0	2	6
FROM MICHAELMAS TO SHROVETIDE,			
The beſt fat wether, at	0	4	4
If ſhorn, at	0	3	0

In the ſame reign in the year 1550, the King and Council fixed the following prices:—*

White wheat, the quarter, at	0	13	0
Red ditto, at	0	11	0
All other ſorts of ditto, at	0	8	0
Beſt malt, per quarter, at	0	10	0
Second ditto, per qr. at	0	8	0
Beſt rye, per qr. at	0	7	0
Second ditto, per qr. at	0	6	0
Beſt barley, per qr. at	0	9	0
Second ditto, per qr. at	0	7	0
Beſt beans and peas, per qr. at	0	5	0
Second ditto, per qr. at	0	3	0
Oats, per qr. at	0	4	0
Beſt butter, per lb. at	0	0	1
Eſſex barreled butter, at	0	0	0¼
All other barreled ditto, at	0	0	0½
Eſſex cheeſe, per lb. at	0	0	0¾
All other ſorts of ditto, at	0	0	0½

Without troubling the reader with any other quotations or tables, reſpecting the practice of fixing the maximum of the prices of neceſſaries in England, the foregoing will be ſufficient to ſhew that our

* Entick, vol. ii. p. 9 and 10.

rulers in former times entertained very different opinions from thoſe of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville.

They, undoubtedly, when they fixed the prices of corn, and the ſeveral other neceſſary articles of life, conceived, that being of ſuch general neceſſity, the farmers who produced, had no more than a qualified property in them; and, conſequently, could have no right to withhold them from market, and periſh their fellow-creatures with hunger;—that the public ſafety ſuperſedes every private privilege, and that to *feed* its *people* is the firſt duty of a Government: that the Farmer ſhould be obliged to ſell his produce reaſonably to his fellow-ſubjects, for whoſe uſe it is his duty to produce it; and conſequently, that for a farmer, or a monopolizer or middle man, ſtepping between him and the public, to withhold corn, or any other neceſſary article of life, from market, or to extort an unreaſonable price for it, was a crime of great magnitude.

So, undoubtedly, in times paſt, thought and reaſoned the Governors of this country, when they fixed the higheſt prices of corn, and all other neceſſary articles of life; ſo *different* were their notions from thoſe of our *preſent rulers*.

That the poor are the greateſt ſufferers by the high price of proviſions and neceſſaries is a fact moſt indubitable; with them exorbitant prices amount to prohibition. Within the laſt twenty-five or thirty years, the prices of the neceſſaries of life, one with another, upon an average, have been trebled; or, in other words, *one* guinea, *twenty-five* or *thirty* years ago, would go as far in houſe-keeping as *three guineas* will at the preſent time; conſequently, that an income of 50l. per annum, twenty-five or thirty years ago, was equal to an income of 150l. per annum at preſent; that an income of 100l. per annum then was equal to 300l. per annum now; that 200l. per annum at that time was equal to 600l. per annum at this; and ſo in proportion to other incomes. Hence it follows, that any income not exceeding 600l. per annum, whether ariſing from in-

duſtry, trade, a public office, money in the funds, or in any other manner, is now, by the increaſed prices of all the neceſſaries of life, and the conſequent expenſes of houſe-keeping, reduced to *one-third* of what it was in value twenty-five or thirty years ago; ſo that, whether a perſon lives by his labour, or the produce of any trade or buſineſs, or is a gentleman or lady of ſmall fortune, (that is, any fortune not exceeding 600l. a year) every one of theſe claſſes of people, within the laſt twenty-five or thirty years, merely by the accumulated prices of the neceſſaries of life, and the expenſes of houſe-keeping, have had their incomes reduced to *one-third* of their value; and *one guinea now* is no more, that is, will go no farther in houſe-keeping, than *ſeven ſhillings* would do twenty-five or thirty years ago.

Perſons of ſmall fortune or income do well when they pity and relieve the poor. It ſhews humanity, and a moſt laudable diſpoſition, and is fulfilling one of the firſt duties of Chriſtianity; they likewiſe have the motive of a fellow-feeling to enforce this duty; for, ſo rapid of late has been the riſe of all neceſſaries, that it is difficult for perſons, not poſſeſſed of large fortunes, to ſay how long it may be before they themſelves may ſtand in need of charity; for the once independent tradeſman, gentleman or lady, of ſmall fortune, are every day ſinking lower and lower into the vale of poverty, by the enormous increaſe of all the neceſſaries of life. None are exempt from this misfortune but perſons of large property; except farmers and dealers, and traffickers in the neceſſaries of life, who are fattening at the expenſe of every other deſcription of their fellow-creatures. But, though it has taken about twenty-five or thirty years for theſe misfortunes to arrive at their preſent magnitude, the evil has not gradually increaſed, but the greateſt part of it has been produced within the laſt five years; even within that time a *guinea* is reduced to the value of half-a-guinea or leſs, and conſequently, all incomes and ſmall fortunes are within that ſhort ſpace reduced to half their value.

TABLE

Of the COMPARATIVE PRICE *of the* NECESSARIES *of* LIFE *for a* FAMILY, *conſiſting of a* Man, *his* Wife, *and* Five *or* Six Children.

PRICES OF PROVISIONS CONTRASTED.

1775.	*s.*	*d.*	1795.	*£.*	*s.*	*d.*	1800.	*£.*	*s.*	*d.*
Bread, 6 half-pecks, at 1s. 1d.	6	6	Bread, 6 half-pecks, at 1s. 11d.	0	11	6	Bread, 6 half-pecks, at 2s. 10d.	0	17	0
Meat, 14 lb. at 4d.	4	8	Meat, 14 lb. at 7d.	0	8	2	Meat, 14 lb. at 10d.	0	11	8
Soap, 1 lb.	0	5½	Soap, 1 lb.	0	0	10	Soap, 1 lb.	0	0	10
Candles, 1 lb.	0	6	Candles, 1 lb.	0	0	10	Candles, 1 lb.	0	0	11
Butter, 2 lb. at 6d.	1	0	Butter, 2 lb. at 10d.	0	1	8	Butter, 2 lb. at 1s. 2d.	0	2	4
Cheeſe, 3 lb. at 3½d.	0	10½	Cheeſe, 3 lb. at 7d.	0	1	9	Cheeſe, 3 lb. at 9d.	0	2	3
Small beer, 3 gall. at 3d..	0	9	Small beer, 3 galls. at 5d..	0	1	3	Small beer, 3 galls. at 7d..	0	1	9
Milk, 1 gallon, ...	0	6	Milk, 1 gallon, ...	0	1	2	Milk, 1 gallon, ...	0	1	4
Vegetables, ...	1	0	Vegetables, ...	0	2	0	Vegetables, ...	0	3	0
Coals, 1 buſhel, ...	1	0	Coals, 1 buſhel.	0	1	4	Coals, 1 buſhel, ...	0	2	0
For one week,	17	3	For one week,	1	10	6	For one week,	2	3	2

Excluſive of Houſe-Rent, Shoes, Stockings, Linen, Woollen, and other Articles of Apparel; Strong Beer, and various domeſtic Neceſſaries which cannot be diſpenſed with, not here enumerated.

If then this rapid increaſe ſhall be ſuffered to continue; and, indeed, if the preſent high prices ſhall not be ſpeedily and effectually reduced, the prices of all kinds of ingenuity, labour, and ſkill, and the profits of every trade, ſhould be increaſed ſo as to keep pace with them; or otherwiſe the great bulk of the people, that is, the middle and lower claſſes, will very ſoon be impoveriſhed to a degree that will greatly injure the national reſources; and for which increaſed contributions from the rich (which, comparatively ſpeaking, are few in number) will by no means compenſate.

HAVING now, at the expenſe of my health and domeſtic concerns laid ſuch documents before the Reader, as, in my opinion, might conduce to the elucidation of the ſubject—I ſhall only ſay, that if it ſhall be found that I have contributed in any degree towards the completion of a code of Corn Laws, &c. founded on the immutable principles of juſtice and humanity, I ſhall feel myſelf amply repaid.

Every honeſt man, and well-wiſher to the peace and happineſs of his country, muſt deprecate whatever may furniſh even the pretext of tumult and diſorder, as the fatal conſequences of an enraged multitude, when common ſenſe and reaſon give up the reins to paſſion and reſentment, are incalculable. The good people of England, ſenſible of the bleſſings which they enjoy under the laws of their country, have, till late, maintained that ſober, ſteady character which they may be ſaid to have inherited from their anceſtors, and which it is hoped they will hand down unimpaired to their poſterity—becauſe, on reflection, they muſt be ſenſible that riot and miſrule have uniformly tended to encreaſe that evil which they wiſhed to avoid—they muſt be ſenſible that the guardians and diſpenſers of the laws will never ſhut their ears to well-founded complaints. They have had ſeveral inſtances of the well-timed humanity of individuals, who viſited want when it could not viſit them; who have wiped away the falling tear; and

who, in the language of Job, became *eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame*—and ſuch, it is hoped, will be always found in this country—And now, ye Farmers,

——— Think! oh! grateful think,
How good the God of Harveſt is to you,
Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields.
——————— the various turns
Of Fortune ponder, that your ſons may want
What now with hard reluctance faint ye give.
THOMSON.

Think of the conſolation it will afford you in your laſt moments, that the heart-felt gratulations of the poor will aſcend before you to the Throne of Grace. But "woe unto you that join houſe to houſe, that lay field to field till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midſt of the earth."*

But, alas! what avail our golden ſuns and waving harveſts; what does it avail if the clouds drop fatneſs on the plains, and our Grain ſhould be as abundant as the ſand upon the ſea-ſhore, if a few men, "curſt with hearts unknowing how to feel," are permitted to graſp at the whole—what avails it, I ſay again, in the ſtrong, but impreſſive language of an able writer, "that our fields ſtand ſo thick with Corn that they laugh," if cunning and fraud are permitted to triumph over juſtice and humanity. Let the Legiſlature proceed in the noble and patriotic taſk of correcting the abuſes which have crept in ſince the repeal of the Laws againſt Engroſſing, &c. then all will be well again—then Plenty will reſume her wonted reign—For ſure,

"A fairer iſle than Britain never Sun
View'd in his wide career! a lovely ſpot
For all that life can aſk, ſalubrious, mild:
Its hills one green, its woods and proſpects fair!
Its meadows fertile, and to crown the whole
In one delightful word, it is our home—our native Iſle!" †

* Iſaiah, Chap. V. v. 8.
† *Cottle's Alfred.*

Repetitions would only defeat the object of this Abridgement, which was to bring within one view, as it were, the causes of the present high, unexampled, and I may add, unexpected price of provisions, and the best and most practicable means of reducing that price within the reach of the industrious poor. It may be said, that I have only joined in the popular cry against Monopolizers, Regraters, and Engrossers. Let my accusers look to the Resolutions of different Corporations throughout the kingdom, and to the Judges of the Land. In the first class they will find that they hold these harpies in the same light that I do; and in the second, let the Charges of Lord Kenyon, Baron Graham, &c. to the Grand Juries be read, and then they will find my opinion of those blood-suckers strengthened by the cool, dispassionate, and disinterested part of the nation, and the venerable oracles of the Law. On this head, I have no malignity to *gratify*, I have a *duty* to fulfil; I am called on by all that should render a man valuable to society,—Humanity. I shall make no apology for my language—it is the plain unadorned language of fact. I cannot calculate the consequence of the evil I am now complaining of,—if it is not immediately plucked up by the root. Low cunning, a total extinction of decent pride and public spirit, are the certain concomitants of poverty. Two different natures lay claim to the human race, and endeavour to drag it different ways. Necessity that arises from our situation, attempts, and but too successfully, to bend us down to unworthy misery and sordid baseness, and as often as we escape from the insulting tyranny of our fate, and acquire a competency and ease, the generous nature that lay stupified and oppressed begins to awake, and to shed its benevolence on all around. These are considerations worthy the Divine, the Philosopher, and the Statesman.

Be it remembered that I do not involve all the Dealers in Grain in one prescription—by no means.—among them are many

——————— on whoſe dilated breaſt,
The heavenly dove of pity loves to reſt.

Many of the Farmers in the preſent year have ſtepped forward in the cauſe of juſtice and humanity; and as to the Nobility and Gentry, they ſtand in no need of any praiſe that I can give; the approbation of their own conſcience will be the greateſt reward. Several Corporate Bodies, &c. have evinced, on many occaſions, the intereſt they felt, and it is hoped, will always feel, in the happineſs of their fellow-ſubjects, in taking ſuch conſtitutional meaſures, as may tend to avert the viſitation of hunger, and all its concomitant miſeries.

THE END.

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